University of Alberta

The First of All Things: The Significance of Place in Metis Histories and Communities in the Qu'Appelle Valley, Saskatchewan

By

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Dedication

Dedicated to Wilbert (Bob) Desjarlais, who always had a story to tell about those places in the valley.

Also dedicated to my daughter Clara, who left us in 2003 but was with me during the writing of this thesis.

And dedicated to Linnéa, whose relationship to the valley has just begun.

Abstract

Place is "the first of all things." It is fundamental to an understanding of Metis histories, communities, and identities. Beginning with complex, dialectical processes of emplacement and experience, place is central to personal and group identity. Through the experience of events in place and their subsequent remembrance, histories are interconnected with place and are place-supported. Metis elders and community members return to their meaningful places in narrative and in daily life as a means to share their histories; impart knowledge about Metis ethnicity, values and traditions; strengthen kinship bonds; and contribute to a sense of community and belonging. Place is crucial to an understanding of the Metis as a people: past, present, and future. This relationship to place is exemplified through Metis elders' and community members' place narratives and praxis connected to the Qu'Appelle Valley, Saskatchewan, as well as through my own fieldwork experiences.

Preface

J.E. Malpas believes that the search for a sense of self-identity is often presented in terms of a search for place (Malpas 1999:178). Trevor Herriot, in his memoir of the Qu'Appelle Valley, Saskatchewan also writes that all longing is not just a yearning for family, but perhaps a longing for a home place (Herriot 2000:3,5). And Keith Basso declares, "All of us...are generally better off with a place to call our own" (Basso 1996:148). I am not quite sure if my own experiences in the valley can be categorized so easily as a search for place or self-identity, but rather a quest to understand how and why places are so meaningful to who we are as individuals and members of a community, and how we come to understand our personal and collective pasts. And in looking for these answers, I could also explore some of the connections I have with the valley.

My father and his ancestors called the valley their home for at least four generations. From various historical records and narrative accounts of my relatives, my ancestors settled in the valley about 1869 or 1870, around the same time as the Red River resistance[1] occurred. My great-great grandparents, Marguerite (Primeau) Pelletier and Joseph Pelletier, who both had roots in Red River, seemed to have had a history with the valley before they settled there. A couple of their older daughters were born in the Qu'Appelle Valley in the early 1860s. They may have even wintered there, as many Metis did back then, as children with their families in the 1840s and 1850s. By 1870, they had forged deeper connections to the area. My great-great grandfather passed away in 1877 and my great-great-grandmother married a Fisher and eventually resided near present day Indian Head and Katepwa. Her son Charles Pelletier married

---

[1] The Red River resistance of 1869-1870 was an attempt by the Metis of Red River to safeguard their settlements, culture and traditions, way of life, language, religion, and economic activities against encroaching colonialist policies of the Canadian government (Dorion and Préfontaine 2001:25). For more information on the Red River resistance, see Douglas Sprague's *Canada and the Metis, 1869-1885* (1988) or Howard Adams' *Prison of Grass: Canada from the Native Point of View* (1975).

Maria Delorme and they settled around Crooked Lake by the late 1890s on a piece of land just north of the valley. Here they built a large house, tended their farm animals, and raised their eight surviving children. My relatives told many stories of my great-grandfather's amazing musical ability with the fiddle and his beautiful white house with the veranda. The house and grounds also boasted several lightning rods, installed after one of their children died from a lightning strike. My grandparents Gaspard and Clara (Lavallee) Pelletier built a cabin nearby after they married, and they lived in close proximity to their extended families. My father used to tell stories of chopping firewood and riding his horse to school. In an old black and white photo, Dad is standing in front of the cabin's mudded walls, holding onto the halter of a scruffy black horse, and smiling at the photographer.

My father left the valley as a young man to find work in the late 1950s. He never returned there again to live. Eventually, the Metis community at Crooked Lake disappeared as people moved into neighbouring towns and cities. The houses and cabins were torn down and other physical clues to the presence of the community were similarly erased. Many of the relatives with whom I talked about this are still nostalgic about the loss of the community. Mentioning Crooked Lake to them brings up hours' worth of stories filled with every range of emotion.

My father married my mother in the late 1960s, and they settled in Alberta. After all those years of Pelletiers residing in and around the valley, my brother and I were the first in four generations to live apart from it. In my father's characteristic mix of Michif words and English, he told us stories about the valley while we were growing up: how he hunted rabbits, went to fiddle dances, endured those cold winters in the cabin. But as youngsters we didn't pay a lot of attention to these narratives, and besides that place seemed so far away, in both time and space. A few years later, our father had moved away and remarried, adding to whatever distance was already created by his new life. Just when I started to take an interest in the valley and what it meant to be Metis with roots in Crooked Lake, my father passed away suddenly as a result

of a car accident while he was down there visiting his old home and his relatives. He is buried in the valley at the old mission in Marieval, just south of where he was raised. From his personal papers I received later, I could see that the valley was still very much on his mind and in his heart. He wrote that even after he had moved away, he could never forget his roots.

This is a part of the connections that I have to the valley: the ties of my ancestors and their histories. Yet there are others. In the process of researching and writing this thesis, I have made new friends, stumbled across relatives I had never met before, and established my own ties to the valley itself through my experiences of living there, leaving, and returning over the course of many seasons. Edward Casey writes that the presence of a place remains with us long after we have left it (Casey 2001b:688). He asserts that we are still, even many years later, in the places to which we are subject because they are in us and indeed *are us*: what we are is an expression of the way a place is (Casey 2001b:688). I have learned that who I am today, how I come to understand myself as a Metis person, as a member of a family and a community, and how I comprehend the past are all connected to the valley. As a Western Apache elder told Basso: "try to hold onto [places]...It's good. You could learn a lot" (Basso 1996:xvi). I hope I have been a conscientious student.

Acknowledgements

This project has been a long time in the making, from the moment I knew I wanted to write about the Qu'Appelle Valley in some form to the finished product you are holding in your hands now. There are quite a number of people to whom I would like to express my gratitude for providing assistance to me along the way. Some of these people were my instructors and professors at university, some were colleagues and classmates, and many were elders, community members, and relatives, who helped me to appreciate and reflect on place, kinship, history, and Metisness. Whether it was a thought-provoking seminar discussion, travels out into the valley to look at the old communities, or the simple joy of a home-cooked meal with newfound relatives, all of these experiences have informed my thinking about this topic and I am indebted to the people who shared their wisdom, knowledge, time, and memories with me. Ay-ay.

In no particular order, I would like to recognize them here. I apologize if I have left anyone out. In addition, although these professors, elders, community members, friends, colleagues, and relatives have contributed to this project, the final construction of this text and the interpretation of it are mine alone. Any errors, omissions, misinterpretations, or misrepresentations are solely my responsibility and not in any way to be associated with the names of the people to follow.

A huge thank you to the elders and community members who shared their memories and stories with me on this learning journey. Some of the stories are presented here and some of them are quiet and personal gems. I wish I could include all of the stories I heard during this project, but due to space limitations and other reasons, this will have to wait for a future writing endeavor. Thanks to Wilbert (Bob) Desjarlais, Dorothy Fayant, Jeanne LaRose, Jim and Lucy LaRocque, Harriet P., Mary S., Pete L., Margaret P., Marie D., Jim and Stella L., Mrs. T., and Robert B. Some of these elders have now passed and journeyed to another place since this project began, but I hope that my words will do justice to the wisdom and memories that they shared with me.

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A prayer and blessing to those who have gone before me, and who still reside in that sacred place...the valley. My father Michael Pelletier, my grandmother Clara (Lavallee) Pelletier, my great-grandfather Charles Pelletier. Also Auntie Elizabeth Pelletier who left the valley for Vancouver but never made it back home again.

And finally thanks to my husband Kevin Murray who provided the encouragement that saw me through this long journey: a journey through illness, surgeries, pregnancies, death of a child, grief, life with a new baby, and even some thesis writing as well. Thanks for helping me finish and for believing that I could get this thesis done.

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æn nistwayr[2]*: "Always Come Back to the Valley"*

I was sitting with some of the Metis elders in the Lebret church basement in late August 2001. I was having tea and baloney sandwiches and listening to some stories. The tea had been organized by the Metis local[3] and the turnout was not too bad. I was at a table with Jim LaRocque, Cliff L., and Wilbert "Bob" Desjarlais. There was a lot of laughter, good natured ribbing, some of it at my expense, and reminiscing about friends and relatives who used to live nearby in Chicago Street or Dog Town or further down past Lake Katepwa. Someone would start a story with, "Eh! Do you remember the time..." and a vivid account would ensue of Saturday night fiddle dances, church socials, and practical joking that would instantly transport me back sixty or more years and place me face to face with the histories of my relations. I started thinking of this strange juxtaposition of being there and here, of the few lonely and abandoned cabins I'd seen left standing in the valley compared to the vivid life in the stories, and as I was musing, the conversation had shifted to relocating, something I'd heard about many times before. This time, someone from the community who had moved away to the city to find work was moving back into the area. Then Lucy, Jim's wife, hearing this conversation as she walked by, came up to the table and said, "No matter where people go, they always come back to the valley."

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[2] æn nistwayr=a story. This spelling was taken from *The Michif Dictionary: Turtle Mountain Chippewa Cree* by Patline Laverdure and Ida Rose Allard (1983). Although others have noted that the use of English spelling leads to some inconsistencies (Bakker 1997), I wanted to title these sections in a manner that did not rely on bracketed phonetic transcriptions nor on standard French spelling.

[3] A local is the term for a community-level Metis political group.

Introduction

> Do you ever go back to Ste. Madeleine?
> Well, I love going in there. I love to look at that place. It's a lovely place, very very lovely. It's a nice place.
>
> What happens when you go there?
> Well, I don't know. I get kind of lonesome, wishing to be back again, in that place. Because that's where I was raised. We made our living in there. We had gardens. We had everything we needed there --Harry Pelletier (Zeilig and Zeilig 1987:146).
>
> Perhaps [place] is the first of all things, since all existing things are either in place or not without place --Archytas (Casey 1993:14).
>
> The power of place will be remarkable --Aristotle (Casey 1996:13).

Edward Casey writes in *Getting Back Into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World*, "to be in the world, to be situated at all, is to be in place" (Casey 1993:xv). Indeed, he reminds us that place has the power to direct and stabilize us, to memorialize and identify us, to tell us who and what we are in terms of *where we are* (Casey 1993:xv). Place is essential and is "the first of all things" as pre- and postmodern scholars have observed.[4] Place exhibits this primary quality beginning at the level of the individual. Through complex, dynamic, interrelational processes of embodied emplacement,[5] our personal identities are shaped by all the places we have been while we have also helped to create the places we experience, each acting as a constitutive ingredient complementing the other. Therefore, "in effect, there is no place without self; and no self without place" (Casey 2001a:406). Expanding from this

---

[4] Casey asserts that place can be considered both premodern or postmodern: "to reinstate place in the wake of its demise in modern Western thought...one can equally well go to the premodern moments described in ethnographic accounts of traditional societies or to the postmodern moment of the increasingly nontraditional present, where place has been returning as a reinvigorated revenant in the writings of ecologists and landscape theorists, geographers and historians, sociologists and political thinkers...and...anthropologists" (Casey 1996:20).

assertion to a more macro level, it is possible to discern how place is also fundamental to the construction of histories and to understandings of community. This thesis explores the centrality of place to remembrance and sharing of past events as well as to conceptions of self and community identities.

While there has been a tendency in the past to peripheralize place as the setting or container for societies and temporality in ethnographies and to render it as a bounded, static, and essentialized monovocal construction (Ward 2003:81-82; Rodman 2003:204-205), place is, in fact, dynamic and dialectical, complex and multiple, and most importantly, meaningful and processual (Tilley 1994:11; Rodman 2003:205; Hirsch 1995:5-6). In addition, place is crucial to any knowledge of temporality or sociality and is a key component of their existence (Soja 1996:71-73; Casey 1993:19-21; Casey 1996:36,44; Massey 1994:4; Malpas 1999:15,17). Indeed, there is no grasping of time without place, for time arises from the experience of place itself (Casey 1993:21; Casey 1996:36). Thus, the spatial is also integral to the construction and imparting of histories (Massey 1993:159), as memories of past events tend to be place-oriented or place-supported: the remembering of past events can be seen as a re-experiencing of past places (Casey 1987:186-187,201). This contention that memory of past events and place are interconnected is corroborated in the ethnographic works of Basso, Cruikshank, Nuttall, and others who demonstrate that place is primary in the recollection and re-presentations of the past (Basso 1996; Cruikshank 1990; Cruikshank 1998; Nuttall 1992; Morphy 1995; Kahn 1996). That place, time, and sociality are so intricately interconnected ensures that we are "first and always historical-social-spatial beings, actively participating individually and collectively in the construction-production--the 'becoming' of histories, geographies, societies" (Soja 1996:73), or as Keith Basso explains:

---

[5] Implacement versus emplacement: both have been used in various texts. In quotations, I have used the form chosen by that author. For consistency in this thesis, I will use "emplacement."

> What people make of their places is closely connected to what they make of themselves as members of society and inhabitants of the earth, and while the two activities may be separable in principle, they are deeply joined in practice. If place-making is a way of constructing the past, a venerable means of *doing* human history, it is also a way of constructing social traditions and, in the process, personal and social identities. We *are*, in a sense, the place-worlds we imagine (Basso 1996:7).

As Basso, Soja, and others affirm, this interconnectedness of place, time, and histories also extends to a connection between place, self, and communities. Casey contends that there is no being without place: to be emplaced and to gain experience in place is to generate knowledge, including self-knowledge, for personal identity involves an awareness of one's place (Casey 1996:18; Casey 2001a:405-406). J.E. Malpas asserts that it is within place that the possibility of the social arises; therefore, our identities are "intricately and essentially place-bound" (Malpas 1999:177). For Basso, knowledge of places is "closely linked to knowledge of the self, to grasping one's position in the larger scheme of things, who one is as a person" (Basso 1996:34). Julie Cruikshank cites a Yukon woman's declaration, "'People are starting to think about their identity, about who they are. And you know how it is when you start thinking about who you *are*--right away, you think of *place*'" (Cruikshank 1998:17). As place-making is also collective in character (Basso 1996:109; Casey 1993:23; Soja 1996:73), many ethnographies attest to the importance of place to a sense of communal identity and community, and a feeling of belonging (Stewart 1996:137,148; Kahn 1996:167-168,178; Blu 1996:223-224; Nuttall 1992:57-58; Basso 1996:35).

This recognition of the centrality of place to histories and communities is not new to Aboriginal peoples in Canada. Many indigenous peoples in this country have acknowledged the importance of place to Aboriginal histories and communities. Canada's Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples describes how existence as an indigenous people is related to the land that "sustains our spirits and bodies...determines how our societies develop...[and is] essential to the continued vitality of the physical, spiritual, socio-economic and political life

and survival" of the people for future generations (Canada 1996, vol.1:490-491). The RCAP explains that "the cultural importance of a homeland is that it links a people with its past and its future" while acknowledging that "identity is symbolized by places of significance" that include the graves of ancestors, places for ceremonial activities, and geographical features (Canada 1996, vol.1:491-492). Likewise, loss of land (and of place) not only leads to feelings of isolation and despair, but can also contribute to a weakening of the kinship, political, and spiritual aspects of community life as well as the inability to pass on cultural (and historical) knowledge (Canada 1996, vol.1:492-493).

As one of Canada's Aboriginal peoples, the Metis[6] are no exception, even if they sometimes do not expressly acknowledge the central role of place in their histories, kinship networks, or conceptions of identity. Elders and other community members often refer to a specific place as "a Metis community" in various texts (Shore and Barkwell 1997; Prince George Metis Elders Society 1999). Indeed, from these texts we can often observe how Metis use place of origin in tandem with their last names when introducing themselves to affirm ethnic solidarity[7] based on communal cultural and historical knowledge (Shore and Barkwell 1997; J. Pelletier n.d.). Many Metis people and political organizations use the term "Metis homeland," with Red River as its locus, to

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[6] A note on terminology: there is no easy answer to the question of how to define "Metis." A variety of definitions abound based on mixed Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal ancestry, shared cultural and linguistic traits, similar histories, and location of community or "homeland." Many organizations and communities use the term "Metis" to denote only those individuals who are descendants of the historic population in western Canada (that is, people whose ancestors were eligible for land under the *Manitoba Act* of 1870 or the *Dominion Lands Act* of 1879). Other groups favor a wider interpretation that includes historic populations of mixed ancestry from across Canada, including eastern Canada (Sawchuk 1998:22-23,36-38). For the purposes of this thesis, the term "Metis" will be used to denote someone who self-identifies as Metis and is considered Metis by members of their community. This could include members of Red River ancestry or others of European-Aboriginal heritage. In the context of this paper, due to the geographical location of the communities and the heritage of the persons involved, all of the elders and community members I interviewed are of Red River Metis descent.

[7] I am using ethnicity in the following sense: ethnicity is a fluid process. Ethnicity is a formation of meaningful and useful social bonds, a cooperative and collaborative social activity that can vary by context, whereby individuals ascribe to an ethnic group based on a feeling of mutual solidarity and recognition of perceived social boundaries (Barth 1969:13-14; Harms 2000:14-18; Nagata 1974:333). Ethnic identity is "meaningfully related to culture in a significant way" (Barth 1969:15), and is "constructed of selected aspects of a people's cultural commonalties" (Appadurai 1996:14).

denote a geographical location that is rich in historical, cultural, and ethnic significance (Metis National Council 2006; Ens 1996; Dorion and Préfontaine 2001:14). In fact, the Metis National Council asserts that its nationhood and the identity of Metis people arises from "a shared history, a common culture...extensive kinship connections...a distinct way of life, a traditional territory, and a collective consciousness" (Metis National Council 2006). In addition, *New Breed Magazine*, a publication of the Metis Nation of Saskatchewan, has profiled a number of communities in their "homeland" over the years, highlighting their historic and cultural importance to the Metis[8] (*New Breed Magazine* 2001a:18-21; *New Breed Magazine* 2001b:19-30,36-44).

Metis places of significance also exhibit commemorative and celebratory aspects. Every July, Metis from across Canada and the United States make the journey to Batoche, Saskatchewan for Back to Batoche Days: four days of dancing and fiddle contests, voyageur games, and other cultural events (*New Breed Magazine* 2001b:16). Other Metis families also participate in the annual July pilgrimage to Lac Ste. Anne, viewed by many people as a historic Metis community, for the services held there and also for the opportunity to reunite with family members from far and wide. Many communities in Saskatchewan organize gatherings such as Tokyo Days for Crescent Lake (*New Breed Magazine 2001c*:18-22) and Lebret Metis Cultural Days in Lebret (*New Breed Magazine* 2001b:17). These gatherings provide community members with an opportunity to return to the places they once lived, reaffirm ties to the area, strengthen kinship networks, and celebrate their heritage and histories at the same time. Moreover, some elders have expressed that the stories and histories they tell, often in the Michif language, need to be told on the land, in the places to which they are connected (Gabriel Dumont Institute 2002).

However, some Metis places are also tinged with sadness and recalled as places of loss. A procession to the cemetery is held during Back to Batoche Days and a Catholic Mass is given to acknowledge the losses suffered by the

---

[8] Communities profiled include Duck Lake, Ile-à-la-Crosse (*New Breed Magazine* 2001b:19-30;36-44), and Willow Bunch (*New Breed Magazine* 2001a:18-21).

Metis during the resistance of 1885[9] (*New Breed Magazine* 2001b:16). Metis elders and community members also express sorrow, loneliness, and disappointment with forced relocations from settlements including Ste. Madeleine, Manitoba (Zeilig and Zeilig 1987:52,71,87,146-147,165,171,174,192), Crescent Lake (Gabriel Dumont Institute 2002), and the Lestock area in southern Saskatchewan to government-created settlements like the one at Green Lake (McLean 1987:196-197). Other elders and community members are wistful and nostalgic about vibrant Metis communities that used to exist in the Qu'Appelle Valley in the 1930s and 1940s, but slowly disappeared as families moved away due to changing economic times and government policies[10] (LaRocque 2001; Desjarlais 2001a; LaRose 2001).

Whether making introductions using family names in conjunction with community, using the term "Metis homeland," making the journey year after year Back to Batoche in celebration, or spending a solitary moment in front of the ruins of a cabin that used to be part of a lively Metis road allowance community, the Metis connection to place is no less complex and no less profound than that of other groups. It is, as Edward Soja observes, "the abstract and the concrete, the real and the imagined, the knowable and the unimaginable...everyday life and unending history" (Soja 1996:56-57). As supported by the works of Basso, Casey, Cruikshank, and many others, place is intrinsic to the creation and re-presentations of Metis histories as well as to personal and community identities (Basso 1996:7,31; Casey 1993:19-21; Massey 1994:4; Soja 1996:71-73). This interconnection appears in examples

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[9] Batoche was the site of another Metis resistance—an attempt by the Metis to take a stand against the Canadian government over outstanding claims. For more information on the resistance at Batoche in 1885, see Douglas Sprague's *Canada and the Metis, 1869-1885* (1988), Howard Adams' "Causes of the 1885 Struggle" (1992), and Don McLean's *1885: Metis Rebellion or Government Conspiracy?* (1985).

[10] Although references to loss, absence, and alterity come up throughout these pages as a recurring theme, this thesis limits the discussion to the importance of place to the construction and re-presentation of histories and conceptualization of self and community arising from aspects of place-based identities. To include a detailed exploration of issues pertaining to absence and alterity for the Metis in the valley is beyond the scope of this thesis. An investigation of other places connected to the valley (such as Regina) as sites of absence and loss is not specifically dealt with in this thesis, but will be explored in a future writing endeavor.

such as Christine Welsh's return to the places of her ancestors to discover her family history and identity in *Women in the Shadows* (Bailey 1991) and in the observation by Dorion and Préfontaine that the Metis experience still remains a "'hidden' history best expressed by the memories of elders and other community people," hence the need for a greater emphasis on local community studies (Dorion and Préfontaine 2001:13,21-22). The link between place, histories, and identities is visible in the communal celebration of Metis history and culture at Batoche every year and in the renewal of family and community ties at reunions held at Crescent Lake or Lebret Metis Days. The following thesis will examine the importance of place to Metis histories and communities. Supported by the place theory of anthropologists Keith Basso (1996) and Julie Cruikshank (1990,1998), philosophers Edward Casey (1987,1993,1996,2001a,b,c) and J.E. Malpas (1999, 2001), geographers Doreen Massey (1993,1994) and Edward Soja (1996) and others, and based upon the narratives of elders and community members as well as my own experiences[11] in the community in the Qu'Appelle Valley,[12] it is my contention that place is crucial to the remembrance and re-presentation of past events of the Metis in the valley. The personal and social memories of community members are place-oriented and interconnected with their surroundings (Basso 1996:31; Casey 1987:186-187; Cruikshank 1990: 346-356; Cruikshank

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[11] The issue may be raised of whether or not what I am doing can be considered insider ethnography or "anthropology at home" (see Jackson 1986). In common with theories or philosophical approaches that endorse a certain level of ambiguity or in-between-ness when dealing with the subject of place, my perspective as an "insider" or "outsider" is also a gray area. While I share kinship ties and a common ethnicity with many of my contacts and interviewees in the valley, I was not raised there. So, although I have similar ancestral ties, traditions, values, and interests, I did not grow up in nor do I reside in the community. Therefore, I do not believe it is strictly auto-anthropology, that is, "anthropology carried out in the social context which produced it" (Strathern 1986:17), especially in light of the importance of place to a sense of self and community.

[12] For the purposes of this thesis, my focus is the Metis of the Qu'Appelle Valley. In basing my research on this specific place, my intent is not to depict the valley as rooted, bounded, and localized. As place theory indicates, places are constantly changing and in flux, and they are subject to the movement in and out of inhabitants. They also exhibit porosity of boundaries and are interconnected by means of social relations to wider networks beyond: networks of social relations at all spatial scales, from the local to the global (Massey 1993:155-156; Massey 1994:4-5; Gupta and Ferguson 1997:6). These aspects are also characteristic of the Qu'Appelle Valley; however, these wider spatial networks and relationships will not be covered here.

1998:17; Kahn 1996:168; Nuttall 1992:54; Stewart 1996:145,148). Places also provide a structure for the memories associated with them, a means for framing and shaping narratives, and places serve to contribute to Metis community histories and understandings of a shared past through both narrative and praxis (Basso 1996; Casey 1987:182-187; Cruikshank 1990:3,346-356; Cruikshank 1998:17; Kahn 1996:167-168; Stewart 1996:145,148).

Similarly, a sense of self, community, and a sense of belonging are also interconnected with place. Based upon the aforementioned place theory and ethnographic works, elders' and community members' narratives, and my own emplaced experience, I also contend that place plays a fundamental role in understandings of individual and community identities (Basso 1996:7,34-35; Casey 1996:18; Casey 2001a:405-406; Cruikshank 1998:17; Stewart 1996:137,148; Kahn 1996:167-168,178; Blu 1996:223-224; Nuttall 1992:57-58). This sense of self and community is generated not only through emplaced experience, both personal and collective, but is also supported through the telling of place narratives that, in conjunction with kinship, create a sense of communal identity and belonging, denoting certain places as Metis places, while providing insight into Metis values and cultural traditions[13] (Cruikshank 1998:20; Nuttall 1992:52-53; Basso 1996:62-63; Kahn 1996:173-179; Cruikshank 1990:346-356). Additionally, the choice of elders and community members to talk about places in narrative and to use places and place names in everyday actions and conversation indicates that these places continue to be perceived as vital to a sense of self and community, and crucial to communal histories. Furthermore, these narratives and actions underscore that places remain significant and meaningful to the Metis of the valley.[14]

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[13] I am using "tradition" here in the sense of a dynamic and symbolic process whereby practices and beliefs that have a correspondence to ways of doing or being in the past are made meaningful to peoples in the present (Handler and Linnekin 1984:286; Borofsky 1987:144-145).

[14] Batoche. Red River. Green Lake. These Metis places of significance also have political aspects. That the Metis relationship to place is political is not surprising. Many scholars have written about the complex political issues related to Metis lands (Sprague 1988; Sawchuk et al 1981, Dusenberry 1985, Canada 1996:vol.4). This political nature becomes more apparent in light of current Metis land claims and the assertion of resource-harvesting rights. Although Metis places are shared places, and can also be contested places--sites of struggle and conflict, it is

æn nistwayr: "Auntie Elizabeth in Vancouver"

I was in Saskatchewan at Cousin Robert's house, and it was May 2002. I had just discovered this entire new branch of my family tree. We were having a great time chatting, looking at old black and white photos of our relatives, drinking lots of black tea, and munching on bakery-fresh chocolate chip cookies. Robert's sister Bertha and her husband George had come over and everyone was sharing stories about my great-grandparents, my great-aunt, and many other familiar names.

I told them that I was going to a wedding in Vancouver in a month's time. My husband's cousin was getting married. Bertha shared the story about Auntie Elizabeth Pelletier, my grandfather's sister, who left the valley to go to Vancouver back in the 1940s, but died out there and never returned home. Bertha said that her sister Laura in Manitoba paid for a marker to be put on her grave, as Elizabeth was originally buried in an unmarked plot. As I would be going out to Vancouver, maybe I could go to Auntie's grave and make sure everything was OK?

The next month, I was in a place about as far from the valley as one can imagine. It was urban, crowded, cold, and decidedly soggy. The rain had soaked through my shoes as my husband and I walked through the grass in the cemetery, flowerpot in hand, to find Auntie Elizabeth Pelletier. We stumbled across the simple marker, and as I was placing the yellow mums on her grave, I couldn't help but think about her being in this place. What was it like for her, dying alone of cancer at the age of 28, two provinces away from her home and family? What was it like for her family? It must have mattered because Laura went through all the trouble to find her and acknowledge her, fifty years after she died, to make sure she was not forgotten. And could this place be any more unlike the sun-baked, prairie environment of the old mission in the valley where most of the other Pelletiers are resting?

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beyond the scope of this thesis to address the Politics of Metis places. Much can be written about the Qu'Appelle Valley and its politics of place in a Metis context, but this will need to be

As I was standing there, tears began to well up. My husband, seeing this, came over to me and asked why. I replied that it was sad that she is here all alone, by herself, and so far away from everyone. He looked at me and said, "Next time we come to Vancouver, we'll bring some soil from the valley with us in a jar of some kind. That way, we can leave it here for her and she can be at home."

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addressed in a future work.

æn nistwayr: "You Will No Longer Be Lost"

I was sitting at the kitchen table of Cousin Robert's house in Saskatchewan in October 2002. It had been about six months since my first introduction to him, that May afternoon when I stumbled in with Bev who asked me to come and meet him--he was an elder who might have some stories about the valley. In an amazing synchronous moment of place, kinship, and time, we found out we were related: my father had been his first cousin. With an exclamation of "Cousin Mike's daughter!" and a big grin, he welcomed us into his home and proceeded to cook a lunch for us of pork chops, fried potatoes, and bread. He even served homemade apple pie for dessert. Later that afternoon, this lifelong bachelor proudly showed us some of his many accomplishments: the boat he had built, the sewing and leatherwork he had created, and his homemade saskatoon jam. Phone calls were made and before I knew it more family showed up. Photos of my great-aunt and great-grandparents were brought out and passed around. In that atmosphere of laughter, stories, cigarette smoke, and strong black tea, I mused about the ties that kept me coming back to the valley and about the new connections that had just been forged.

So, it was October. It felt like I was just here, and I had this strange sensation of time standing still while we were sitting at the kitchen table. Robert had fixed me another dinner of ham and potatoes fried in his homemade lard, and we were talking about whom I had visited and what my plans were for this regrettably too short visit back to Saskatchewan. We started talking about Ste. Marthe, the Metis church that I had finally visited with his sister Bertha. He jumped up and showed me some black and white photos he had taken, photography being another of his many hobbies. He told me of the Ste. Marthe reunion every summer, a chance for all the families who have moved away to come back to this place, to reconnect, and to see each other again. He looked at me, quite serious for a moment, and said, "You come back to Ste. Marthe. Then you will meet all your aunties, and you will no longer be lost."

Methodology

I recall reading somewhere that we write to discover ourselves. I have also heard in many different forms that we do not pick our projects, but our projects pick us. I guess that in this case, both can be applied here. This thesis project started out as an aspiring ethnohistory of the Metis in the Qu'Appelle Valley when I started my Master's coursework in September 2000. I had high expectations to undertake such a task at the Master's level, but I was just starting my degree and anything seemed possible.

I made my first visit down to the valley to meet with community members November 9–11, 2000. I met with George Fayant, who was the manager of Metis Human Resources, Eastern Region III at that time. We discussed the possibility of my coming down to the valley to spend the summer talking to elders and gathering information that would be useful for the community. The material would also contribute to a Metis history of the valley. He agreed that it was a good idea and wrote letters of support on my behalf, stating, "We have a very rich cultural history here and many stories that need to be documented before they are lost forever" (G. Fayant 2000). He also wrote that he hoped the information could be compiled to help develop an educational database that could be used for classroom instruction as well as to help with court cases involving local Metis hunters and fishers (G. Fayant 2000).

During that preliminary visit, I also met with George's mother Dorothy and his aunt Margaret. They took me to meet George's grandmother, Florence (Racette) Desjarlais, who was not feeling well and was in the local hospital for a rest. The family did not seem overly concerned as they knew that she would be up and around soon and back home in a matter of days. Mrs. Desjarlais had asked to see me, so I went with Dorothy and Margaret to the hospital for a short visit. We had a pleasant chat, and Mrs. Desjarlais joked with me about being "a lady who likes to travel," having come all the way from Edmonton. George had mentioned that his grandmother had a wealth of knowledge about living on the land in the valley and it would be wonderful if I could interview her the next time

I came back in the spring. I never did get that chance. Mrs. Desjarlais passed away a few days after we met and from what George told me, she was carried to her final resting-place in the valley on a Red River cart.

My next visit to the valley was February 17–21, 2001. It was my last trip before coming down there to do my fieldwork in the summer. An Elder's Tea had been arranged for Sunday February 18 in Lebret and I had the opportunity to meet with some of the valley's elders and listen to the stories being told...well, the ones that weren't told in Michif. What a great experience to hear the elders laughing, joking, and telling stories all in Michif--the language of the Metis, and sadly, a language on the verge of extinction. During that visit, I also met with George Fayant's uncle Wilbert "Bob" Desjarlais. Thus began the first of many wonderful sessions talking about the lives, times, and stories of the people in the valley.

My fieldwork for this thesis lasted from May 13 to August 29, 2001. During that time I lived for two weeks in May in Lebret at the Lebret Hotel--I don't miss the 4 a.m. trains rolling through--and then I took up residence at the Qu'Appelle House of Prayer, just outside of the town of Fort Qu'Appelle, for the duration of my fieldwork. Aside from two short trips away, one at the end of June back to Edmonton and one to Winnipeg in July to go to the Hudson's Bay Company Archives, I lived in the community for those four months. The Eastern Region III of the Metis Nation of Saskatchewan had graciously provided me with in-kind office space, so I had somewhere to work every day, make phone calls, and use the photocopier and the internet.

During the time that I was living in the community, I did as much research as I could, whether it was conducting interviews, researching in the library, or even learning to jig and square dance at dances held at the Lebret Metis farm. I read various community histories from Fort Qu'Appelle, Lebret, Balcarres, Abernethy, and other places. While I was at the Hudson's Bay Company Archives, I poked around for information on Fort Qu'Appelle and other forts that were located in the valley. I spent time at the Fort Qu'Appelle Museum, and I also went to the Prairie History Room at the Regina Public

Library. I kept a daily log of observations and field notes about my experiences in this place. I went to Back to Batoche in July with a group of people from the valley. I conducted several interviews with elders and community members, trying to connect the dots and construct what I thought could be a passable Metis history of the area. Mostly, I aimed to be a good listener and to help out the elders and community members whenever I could be of assistance.

The interviews themselves came about as an interesting, organic process. There seemed to be no formalized system associated with it. Someone in the community would hear about what I was trying to do and would suggest that I talk to a certain person. The community member would then make the call or set up the meeting. Eventually, my visits stretched further and further afield, all the way to the Manitoba border. Likewise, the interviews and interview process reflected this fluid nature. I informed participants before I met with them about my project and goals and asked if we could set up a meeting for our next visit. I brought gifts and food to the interviews, and before any interview began, I received oral consent to participate based on the principles outlined in the written consent forms. This was done deliberately. In my experience, many Metis elders have a deep suspicion of signing forms due to the legacy of the scrip process.[15] The interviews generally lasted between 45 minutes to two hours and were tape-recorded. When I returned with copies of their finished transcripts, participants were given a detailed form on which they could indicate how they wanted the material to be used, how they wished to be acknowledged, what restrictions they wanted placed on the material et cetera. Participants were provided with copies of their interview material for their own records. Some of the elders with whom I worked discussed the need to have their interviews included in a book for the community. They expressed concern that many of the young people growing up today have no concept of what life

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[15] The scrip process was a government means to address outstanding Metis claims. However, due to the numerous problems associated this process, ranging from speculator fraud and forgery to just plain ill-design of the program which "operated in such a way as to encourage the passage of scrip from their hands," the vast majority of scrip did not ultimately end up in Metis

was like back in the 1930s and 1940s in the valley's road allowance[16] communities, and they do not seem interested in this important connection to the past. This is unfortunate considering what these stories illustrate about the importance of understanding where we come from to appreciate who we are in the present and who we will be in the future. Thus, one of my goals includes creating a book for the community with these valuable texts that so strongly emphasize the Metis connections to the Qu'Appelle Valley.

As a note about the oral history process, I realize that in the course of taping and transcribing these stories, I have taken them out of context: out of their place and out of time in a manner that transforms a dynamic and intersubjective process into a static and codified text that is problematic and awkward. For the purposes of this thesis, I have selected, edited, and presented the interview material here in a manner that is not unlike "history-making" and is also very limiting in terms of honouring the stories and sentiment shared by the elders who spoke with me. However, as imperfect and flawed as this process may be, it offers a means to preserve the stories that are so vital to knowledge of ourselves, our histories, and our place. This becomes even more important as generations have now grown up away from valley settlements and communities, and the elders who possess this knowledge are leaving us.

The process from ethnohistory to this thesis on place also went through an evolution. I was struggling with the idea of writing "a history" per se. I was not sure I wanted to take on that task at this level, and even more, whether I wanted to create a history that was a linear chronology of the Metis in the valley. Who was I to do this and whose history would it be? Likewise, the elders and their stories kept bringing me back to place: not just as a setting, but as the important thematic link in their memories. The stories seemed to underscore the vitality of the connection between place-community and kinship, understanding one's past, and identity. When these concepts of place, kinship, and identity

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possession (Sawchuk et al 1981:117). For more information on the Metis and the scrip process, see Sprague (1988) and Sawchuk et al (1981).

[16] During the early to mid-20th century, the Metis often built houses on road lines and squatted on Crown lands. See Campbell (1973) and Sealey and Lussier (1975).

came up over and over in the context of the valley, I began to formulate a new direction for the thesis--one that would address this connection and hopefully honour the elders and community members who patiently led me to this new path. Along the way, I also began reading place theory and about phenomenology,[17] and I knew that this is where I wanted to go.

During my fieldwork, I read sections of Linda Tuhiwai Smith's *Decolonizing Methodologies*, and I was inspired by the set of ethical principles for Maori research that she listed:

- Aroha ki te tangata (a respect for people)
- Kanohi kitea (the seen face, that is, present yourself to people face to face)
- Titiro, whakarongo...korero (look, listen...speak)
- Manaaki ki te tangata (share and host people, be generous)
- Kia tupato (be cautious)
- Kaua e takahia te mana o te tangata (do not trample over the *mana* of people)
- Kaua e mahaki (don't flaunt your knowledge)

(Smith 1999:120).

From this list, I have to say that in tandem with respect, the principle about "the seen face" had a great influence on me. I hoped that through my actions and my return visits, I could develop (and maintain) a good working relationship with community members. So, even after my fieldwork was concluded and my summer bursary money was long gone, I kept returning and I kept in touch. I sent letters and Christmas cards to the interviewees. I made four return visits to the valley and southeastern Saskatchewan from October 4–9, 2001, February 26–March 2, 2002, May 27– June 2, 2002, and October 9–12, 2002. I also made quick personal visits back down in October-November 2003, January 2004, and most recently July 2005. Even during the personal visits, I met with community members and interviewees. I drove that 853 kilometres

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[17] Michael Jackson describes phenomenology as "the scientific study of experience" and "a way of illuminating things by bringing them into the daylight of ordinary understanding" (Jackson 1996:1-2). I cannot say that I am well versed in phenomenology; however, its underlying concepts and methods are useful for understanding place and place memory.

down and back many times. When I was able to, I got a seat sale from West Jet and rented a car for my forays around Saskatchewan. I remember many of the elders and community members smiling in amusement when I told them that I was only down for two or three days, but I had driven about a thousand kilometres all over the southern part of the province in that time. Whether they thought I was silly to be running the roads or I was a throwback to the nomadic Metis, who knows. These return visits, although often too short, gave me an opportunity to meet with elders and community members and to assure them that I hadn't forgotten about them. I also conducted more interviews when community members were willing. The visits strengthened my connection to the valley and my own sense of place. They provided me with the chance to see the valley in all of its seasonal incarnations: blazing hot in summer, decked out in fall splendor, or frozen over at an icy minus 38 with windchill. Most importantly, the journeys kept me connected to the place I was writing about and even provided me with examples that reaffirmed my theoretical readings. Each time I walked into the Squire Inn's restaurant during every return trip, I had a feeling like I had never left the place. Even as I sit here writing, I'm thinking about the smell of sage and summer grasses growing on the hills in July and August while travelling the dusty roads with good friends amid gales of laughter. I'm also thinking about the shimmer of sun dogs over a valley covered in January's hoar frost, as my boots crunch the snow underfoot and I make my way to the Region III office on the Metis farm for a long overdue visit. I have a deep longing to go back. I had planned for longer return visits to the community these past couple of years, but life circumstances kept me in Edmonton and prevented me from spending that extended time with the people whose company I enjoy, in the valley where I feel so at home. But as I have realized from my experiences and my readings, we can keep returning to our significant places, whether in person or in our memories, and our connection is still there and still strong. This is the remarkable power of place.

æn nistwayr: "This is All History We're Doing Here"

It was a warm, sunny day at the end of May 2001. George Fayant, Bob Desjarlais, and I were on a road trip through the valley to see some of the places Bob wanted to show to us. We had taken George's brand new car out on the dirt roads, through farmers' fields, and we were on Fort Ellis Trail: the old fur trade trail that runs the length of the valley to St. Lazare, Manitoba. As we drove by the empty fields and crossroads, Bob was sketching the houses of his family and neighbors from memory. I had brought along my tape recorder and a notepad, and I taped the following conversation:

Bob Desjarlais: OK, now we're getting to what they called *baran bas* here, eh.

George Fayant: And that is...

BD: That is, "down in the valley." That's *baran bas*. That's what it means. "Down in the valley." This is where...all the Metis starts here. We used to have our garden right there in that little neck there, where it goes in there. That used to be all our garden there at one time. Used to have about an acre or more there garden. Boy we used to have some beautiful gardens. Yeah. OK. In this corner here, we used to live right up in there, right where them big trees are. There used to be a house there and there used to be a house right there. And there was a house in this bush here. There was three of them. We used to live over there and then my uncle Pete lived there and then my uncle Sam Klyne lived there, a brother to that Joe Klyne that I was telling yous lived in that coulee up there. That used to be his brother lived there. OK. You got that? You got that in your computer, Mister? OK. Let's go this way now. By the time we get back, your computer's going to be so filled up, George, it'll be ready to burst. Your computer'll be so full of knowledge. History. This is all history we're doing here (Desjarlais 2001a:29).

æn nistwayr: "Houses"

That spring day in 2001 when George Fayant, Bob Desjarlais, and I drove through the valley to see some of the places Bob wanted to show us, I observed him sketching on his notepad as we cruised by the vacant road allowance sites and crossroads. While he provided us with a running commentary of the places, who had lived there, and how they had been related to him, he was drawing pencil images of buildings. These drawings were the long-vanished houses of his family and neighbors. All the while, he was talking quietly to himself, working out whether the house he was depicting had had one window or two and what the roof had looked like. At the time, I didn't ask him about his remembrance of the houses, thinking that it was an ongoing personal project of his, in much the same way as his enthusiastic interest in genealogy or his recordings of his own stories in Michif.

Imagine my surprise, long after my fieldwork stay was over, when an envelope from Bob showed up in my mailbox one day. Inside the envelope, I found fifteen pages of detailed drawings of the houses that used to be the homes of the Metis down in the valley. Each image was a rendition from memory of various types of Metis houses. He had included a summary beside each sketch with the name of the family, of what material the house had been constructed, how many kids had been in the family, where the house had been located and when it had been built. I flipped through the pages, amazed at the effort that had gone into creating this: the hours he must have spent with the help of his family members to put all of this information together and to send it to me.[18] And furthermore, I was more than a little humbled to receive it, and it set me to thinking once again about the influence of place. What did place mean to him to have the houses of his relatives, ever present in his memory, made tangible for others by committing them to paper? And why with Bob thinking that I was doing an ethnohistory of the valley Metis, did he send me the

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[18] Out of respect for Bob Desjarlais' wishes, the drawings are not included with this thesis.

sketches of the houses? I'll never know, but I like to think that he knew from the beginning where the focus of my study needed to be.

Theoretical Perspectives:

Space, place, histories, self, and everything (is) in between

What is the nature of an individual's or a community's connection to place? How is it that knowledge of places is tied to knowledge of self (Basso 1996:34)? Why is place so intricately tied to a people's histories, social traditions, and personal and social identities (Basso 1996:7)? These questions lie below the surface in the memories and narratives of Metis elders and community members as illustrated in some of the observations referenced in the Introduction. What compels Metis from across western Canada and the United States to come back to Batoche every year or to return to long-abandoned places like Ste. Madeleine and Crescent Lake (Zeilig and Zeilig 1987; Gabriel Dumont Institute 2002)? Why did Christine Welsh find it necessary to travel to the places of her ancestors to understand her Metis roots and who she is as a Metis woman (Bailey 1991)? How is it that when discussing "history" with a Metis elder, the interview narrative is structured around place (LaRocque 2001)? Why do the elders still have such powerful and tangible memories of the houses in which they grew up, the gardens they planted, the dances they attended, and the communities to which they belonged more than fifty years after the fact (Desjarlais 2001a,b; D. Fayant 2001; LaRocque 2001; LaRose 2001)? Why did my father's cousin tell me to come back to Ste. Marthe so I would "no longer be lost"? In order to appreciate these narratives and memories, key concepts pertaining to place need to be examined. The following section will detail aspects of place theory to gain a better understanding of the role of place in Metis histories and communities.

Before I begin any analysis focusing on a sense of place, I need to examine some of the terminology and language associated with this topic. The problem is, however, there is little consensus on what terms such as "space," "place," "landscape," and "locale" mean and subsequently even less agreement on how they are to be used. Anthropologist Margaret Rodman writes that place

is a problem in anthropological theory because "the meaning of place too often seems to go without saying" (Rodman 2003:204). She adds, "Anthropologists who take pains to lead students through the minefields of conceptualizing culture often assume that place is unproblematic" (Rodman 2003:204). Indeed, "Place has to be one of the most multi-layered and multi-purpose words in our language" (Harvey 1993:4). Geographer Edward Soja notes that although there is a greater need for a "strategic awareness of this collectively created spatiality and its social consequences" than ever before to make "theoretical and practical sense of our contemporary life-worlds at all scales," concerns remain over the understanding and use of spatial theory and terminology (Soja 1996:1-2). He observes that the practical and theoretical comprehension of space and spatiality is being misconstrued by older definitions that no longer fit the changing contexts of the contemporary moment or by trendy catchphrases that substitute current relevance for deeper understanding (Soja 1996:2).

According to geographer Doreen Massey, misconceptions and misuses of the terminology arise from the multiplicity of definitions adopted about terms such as "space" and their subsequent heavy use *sans* definition by authors. She notes that scholars and writers assume that the meanings of these terms are clear and uncontested, yet the meaning and metaphorical usage varies greatly from author to author (Massey 1993:141-142). Finally, this phenomenon continues because "buried in these unacknowledged disagreements is a debate which never surfaces, and it never surfaces because everyone assumes we already know what these terms mean" (Massey 1993:142). So, with these points in mind, I will provide a selection of the prevailing ideas and usages of terminology describing spatial phenomena. Like many aspects of place, the concepts themselves can often be complex and contradictory; however, some main patterns should emerge.

Anthropology and Place: Some Considerations

In her article, "On Shifting Ground: Changing Formulations of Place in Anthropology," Sally Ward notes that place is fundamental to the practices of anthropology as anthropologists collect data and construct theories on the

ground, in particular places (Ward 2003:80). A distinguishing characteristic of anthropology historically has been its locatedness; ethnography reflected "the circumstantial encounter of the voluntarily displaced anthropologist and the involuntarily localized 'other'" (Ward 2003:81; Appadurai 1988:16). Therefore, Ward observes a certain logic at work in anthropologists' interest in how place is constructed and experienced, how identity is located, and how belonging is achieved (Ward 2003:81). Indeed, although specific locations have served as bases for situating cultural phenomena, anthropologists have only conceptualized place itself as an explicit topic in the past twenty years (Ward 2003:81,85). Eric Hirsch also notes that landscape and place issues have received "little overt anthropological treatment" in the past (Hirsch 1995:1). So, what are some of the understandings and concepts about place that have appeared over time and in what ways can we examine its complexity?

Both Ward and Rodman relate that in earlier ethnographies, place was often little more than a setting: a fixed and unchanging container where events transpired (Ward 2003:81-82; Rodman 2003:204-205). Influenced by geography's early to mid-20th century preoccupation with chorology, the study of regions, anthropological work of this era and chorology shared some general commonalties: the emphasis on description, the tendency to peripheralize place as the setting or locale for events and culture, and the aim to inscribe boundaries. According to Tim Cresswell, chorology (or regional geography) was a way of understanding the world by describing "a place-region in great detail, starting with the bedrock, soil type, and climate and ending with 'culture'" (Cresswell 2004:16). He adds that a substantial amount of time was also spent differentiating one region from another, that is to say, drawing boundaries (Cresswell 2004:16). Ethnographies produced during the same decades (the 1950s and later) contain similar traits: places were sketched out in intricate detail like the backdrop of a stage and depicted as the "constant and natural 'reality' against which the cultural and social action of the story unfolds" (Ward 2003:82). In common with the bedrock, there was a timeless, rooted aspect to places. Places were characterized as unchanging and static. Yet another

commonality with chorology was the emphasis on boundaries and the creation of discrete units: homelands or communities enclosed by boundaries. Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson assert that we should question "anthropology's implicit mapping of the world as a series of discrete, territorialized cultures," as well as the tenet that a culture is the property of a spatially-localized people (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:3).

In light of these issues, Ward, Rodman, and Gupta and Ferguson observe that there are some notable problems with the concept of place in terms of anthropology. With the tendency of past (and some more recent) ethnographies to depict place as timeless and unchanging, it becomes a fixed and static entity that cannot be imbued with any new meaning (Ward 2003:82-83). Based on this understanding of place as the "constant and natural 'reality'" for the peoples living in this ethnographic locale, place becomes a generic concept with cultures that are temporally and spatially bounded, and with corresponding relationships that are stable and singular (Ward 2003:83). Gupta and Ferguson reiterate how "all associations of place, people, and culture are social and historical creations to be explained, not given natural facts" (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:4). Thus, they assert, "Whatever associations of place and culture may exist must be taken as problems for anthropological research rather than the given ground that one takes as a point of departure" (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:4). Rodman also describes pressing problems that she sees within anthropology in regards to concepts of place. Places as anthropological constructions have been equated with an exotic setting or inert container where things happened (Rodman 2003:204). Places have come to localize strategies or ideas, or they have been used as metonyms, where one specific area stands for a much larger place, like Andalusia standing for all of Spain (Rodman 2003:204-205). She also writes that places are not just the essentialized, totalized western academic creations of anthropologists, but are "politicized, culturally relative, historically-specific, local and multiple constructions" of the peoples who are connected to them (Rodman 2003:205). These physical, emotional, and experiential realities that places hold for peoples need to be

understood apart from their creation as the locales of ethnography, for although anthropologists create places in ethnography, "they hold no patent on place-making" (Rodman 2003:205).

Place and Space

Philosopher Edward Casey also calls attention to problematic understandings of place and place-making in anthropology. Casey cites examples from James Weiner's ethnography of the Foi in New Guinea, *The Empty Place* (1991) and Fred Myers' *Pintupi Country, Pintupi Self* (1991). Weiner describes how a society's place names "schematically image a people's intentional transformation of their habitat from sheer physical terrain into a pattern of historically experienced and constituted space and time...The bestowing of place names constitutes Foi existential space out of a blank environment" (Weiner 1991:32). Likewise, Myers relates that through a process whereby a space is "culturalized," "impersonal geography" becomes "a home, a *ngurra*" when "a story gets attached to an object...part of the Pintupi habit of mind that looks behind objects to events and sees in objects a sign of something else" (Myers 1991:54,67). Myers suggests that these transformations are the result of "projection" or "reproduction": the Country, the system of significant places as specified by the Dreaming, represents "a projection into symbolic space of various social processes" while the structure of the Dreaming in turn can be seen as "a product of the way Pintupi society reproduces itself in space and time" (Myers 1991:47-48; Casey 1996:15). Casey notes that the phrase "in space and time" is telling: this reproduction-projection is in some kind of preexisting empty medium, with no inherent configurations of its own, which must be populated and made particular after the fact by the processes attributed to the Dreaming (Casey 1996:15). Thus, "Generality, albeit empty, belongs to space; particularity, albeit mythic, belongs to place; and the twain meet only by an appeal to a procedure of superimposition that is invoked *ex post facto*" (Casey 1996:15). This represents the continuing tendency of many scholars (including anthropologists) to assume that human experience begins with space and time and then proceeds to place

through processual forces (Casey 1996:13). The endemic belief is that space is absolute, infinite, and *a priori* in status: it is the neutral, pre-given medium or *tabula rasa* onto which particularities of culture and history come to be inscribed (Casey 1996:14). Hence, for many scholars, place is something that is created from space: an apportioning and compartmentalization of the spatial monolith (Casey 1996:14).

But this is not a universally-held opinion. Interestingly, the Pintupi think otherwise: "To the Pintupi then, a place itself with its multiple features is logically prior or central" (Myers 1991:59). To this Casey asks:

> Whom are we to believe? The theorizing anthropologist, the arsenal of his natural attitude bristling with explanatory projectiles that go off into space? Or the aborigine on the ground who finds this ground itself to be a coherent collocation of pre-given places--pre-given at once in his experience and in the Dreaming that sanctions this experience? For the anthropologist, Space comes first; for the native, Place; and the difference is by no means trivial. It is not, of course, simply a matter of choosing between the anthropologist's vantage point and that of the natives-- as if the Pintupi had chosen to participate in a debate on the comparative primacy of space versus place. Nor is any such primacy Myers's own express concern. As an anthropologist in the field, his task is not to argue for space over against place but to set forth as accurately as possible what being-in-place means to the Pintupi. Just there, however, is the rub: even when treating a culture for which place is manifestly paramount, the anthropologist leans on a concept that obscures what is peculiar to place and that (by an implicit cultural fiat) even implies its secondariness. The anthropologist's theoretical discourse--in which the priority of space over place is virtually axiomatic--runs athwart his descriptive commitment (Casey 1996:15).

The question here is not *whom* we should believe but *what* we are to believe (Casey 1996:15). Do we believe that human experience starts from a blank "space" to which placial modifiers are added through perception first and later through culture? Or do we believe that the myriad of features around us are "pre-given" places (Casey 1996:15-16)? Even though Myers' and Weiner's ethnographies are relatively recent, their depiction of place as the "sheer physical terrain" that becomes culturalized through processes or the

transformation of "existential space" out of a blank environment into a home is reminiscent of Ward's and Rodman's critiques of place previously conceptualized in ethnography. As mentioned previously, Rodman writes that anthropological constructions of place have been rendered as an exotic setting where events occurred (Rodman 2003:204). Likewise, Ward explains that ethnographies of the past (and present, it seems) have represented place as the "constant and natural 'reality' against which the cultural and social action of the story unfolds" (Ward 2003:82). Could these events and the cultural and social action of the story include the culturalization of a "blank environment"? This issue of space versus place or general, abstract geography versus meaningful, particular experience goes beyond these scholars and winds its way through the works of many others, something I shall return to shortly.

Anthropologists are not the only ones to make use of this dualistic legacy left to us by modernist scientists.[19] This tendency to formulate spatial frameworks based upon understandings of space and place also appears in other texts. Archaeologist Christopher Tilley distinguishes between "scientific" or "abstract" space and "humanized" or "meaning-laden" space with a set of specific characteristics that he has conceptualized as a dichotomy:

ABSTRACT SPACE:	HUMAN SPACE:
Container	Medium
Decentered	Centered
Geometry	Context
Surfaces	Densities
Universal	Specific
Objective	Subjective
Substantial	Relational
Totalized	Detotalized
External	Internal
System	Strategy
Neutral	Empowered
Coherence	Contradiction
Atemporal	Temporal

(Tilley 1994:8).

Tilley makes some additional observations about his conceptual framework. He includes the characteristics "materialist, rational" and "idealist, irrational" at the bottom of the lists with cross-over arrows to indicate that whereas "Abstract Space" was once viewed as the rational and materialist approach to the study of spatial phenomena, contemporary arguments now indicate that it is a form of irrational idealism and vice-versa (Tilley 1994:8). He describes how the previous conception of space as an abstract container where events took place ensured that spatiality and temporality were kept separate, thereby decentering space from its agency and meaning (Tilley 1994:9). Likewise, space as a neutral, quantifiable phenomenon that existed outside of human affairs kept it free from any notions of power and politics (Tilley 1994:9). Space provided the ideal unitary and homogeneous backdrop for human action on which societal change could be documented and measured (Tilley 1994:9). Later, an alternative view of space developed that entailed understanding it as a medium: something that cannot exist independently from the events, societies, and individuals within it (Tilley 1994:10). Spaces, not just space, are socially produced on a day-to-day praxis level, which ensures that spaces are always dynamic and transforming themselves and the peoples within them (Tilley 1994:10). Spaces are rich in human agency and action, contextually constituted, specific, dialectical, subjective (intersubjective), and meaningful (Tilley 1994:11). Similarly, because spaces are perceived and experienced differently by each person, they are complex, contradictory, conflict-ridden, and full of relational significance created through the relations between peoples and places. Spaces are thus intimately related to the formation of biographies and social relationships (Tilley 1994:11).

This reliance on the polarities of place and space can also be found in Eric Hirsch and Michael O'Hanlon's *The Anthropology of Landscape: Perspectives on Place and Space* (1995). In his introduction, Eric Hirsch

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[19] Casey observes that modernists and their continuous search for mathematical expressions of pure spatial relations contributed to the subjugation of place to space and then of space to time (Casey 1996:19-20).

describes how the concept of landscape "entails a relationship between the 'foreground' and 'background' of social life," in which the foreground is the concrete actuality of everyday life or "the way we are now" and the background is our potential or "the way we might be" (Hirsch 1995:3). Therefore, landscape equals this relationship between the two areas of social life--a process of mutual implication--and this foreground-background relationship can be found cross-culturally (Hirsch 1995:3; 23). Hirsch writes that the notion of landscape cannot be isolated from a number of related concepts including place and space, inside and outside, and image and representation (Hirsch 1995:3-4). Every one of these correlated aspects takes on a local quality and corresponds to "one of the two poles of the notion of landscape," which can be arranged in a tabular form (Hirsch 1995:4):

Foreground actuality	Background potentiality
Place	Space
Inside	Outside
Image	Representation

(Hirsch 1995:4).

While these characteristics seem to form a set of binary opposites, Hirsch explains that this is not the case. These attributes are "a series of related, if contradictory moments-perspectives," dependent on cultural and historical context, which "cohere in what can be recognized as a singular form" (Hirsch 1995:23). He affirms that the concepts on the left side of the table correspond to what we would comprehend as the context and form of everyday, unreflexive forms of experience, and the right column equals the context and form of the experience beyond the daily one (Hirsch 1995:4). These two columns are not unconnected but are transitions possible within a single relationship, similar to a person losing his way on a familiar journey and relocating himself by an external reference point or an empty place that fills with foreground experience: "What is being defined as landscape here is the relationship seen to exist between these two poles of experience in any cultural context. Landscape thus emerges as a cultural *process*" (Hirsch 1995:5-6). This

conceptualization of the place and space relationship is similar to Tilley's assertion, "Geographical experience begins in places, reaches out to others through spaces, and creates landscapes or regions for human existence" (Tilley 1994:15).

Other scholars have also commented on aspects of this dichotomous framework. Yi-Fu Tuan, whose seminal work in humanistic geography has been a cornerstone of the discipline, argues that grappling with the relationship between space and place lies at the heart of geographical inquiry (Tuan 1977; Adams et al 2001:xiv). Tuan uses the analogy of cosmos and hearth to describe two scales and two sets of values. Hearth represents the local, cozy, and familiar, accessible to direct experience, while cosmos is the large, abstract, and impersonal, only accessible to mediated experience (Tuan 2001:319). He notes that these realms can also take figurative meanings of locality, community, and ethnicity (hearth) and space, society, and world (cosmos) (Tuan 2001:321). However, he admits that although he polarized the concepts in his book *Cosmos and Hearth: A Cosmopolite's Viewpoint* (1996), he believes that these worlds ideally overlap (Tuan 2001:319). The argument over the relative merits of each may be resolved if "we start by recognizing that both are necessary...to the development of our full humanity...although we can treat 'cosmos' and 'hearth' as polar opposites...full human contentment seems to require that both be present and mutually supported" (Tuan 2001:321). Yet, in previous works Tuan does endorse the culturalization of space when he describes how undifferentiated, abstract space can turn into place as it becomes known and endowed with value and meaning (Tuan 1977:6).

Finally, some scholars do not agree with the conceptualization of space and place into discrete units nor the idea that space becomes place (or conversely place becomes space) through some sort of cultural and temporal progression. According to Casey, "struggling out from under the Colossus of Descartes (and other proponents of the priority of space over place) continues to be extremely difficult," even after three hundred years of philosophical critique and two decades of assiduous efforts on the part of geographers to

restore place to a position of central significance (Casey 2001a:404). He observes that the entire debate between modernism and postmodernism can be depicted in terms of this still unresolved relationship: the modernist's insistence on the priority of space, including "well-ordered physical space or highly structured institutional space" and the postmodernist's conviction in the primacy of place, particularly lived place (Casey 2001a:404). He maintains that these dichotomous categories are simply two different realms:

> My own view is that space and place are two different *orders* of reality between which no simple or direct comparisons are possible...Nor can we justifiably affirm that place somehow *derives* from space: that it is dependent on it and shaped by it...Place is situated in physical space, but then so is everything else, events as well as material things; it has no privileged relationship to that space, either by way of exemplification or representation. Nor can it be derived from it by some supposed genealogy. To believe in such a genealogy is to buy into the modernist myth that the universe is made of pure extended space and that anything less than such infinite space, including place, follows from it by condensation or delimitation (Casey 2001a:404-405).

Like Casey, there are other scholars who argue against the conceptualization of place into a dichotomous framework. Geographer Doreen Massey asserts that we need to rethink the unity of space and place in different terms and to challenge the very form of polarized dichotomies (Massey 1994:6-7). These dichotomous paradigms are linked to the broader system of western thought that distinguishes between categories in a continuous series of mutual oppositions (Massey 1994:6). In terms of place, Massey contends that place represents "Being," and it has a range of connotations attached: local, specific, concrete, and descriptive (Massey 1994:9). These connotations are paired with oppositions such as general, universal, theoretical, abstract, and conceptual (Massey 1994:9). She advocates "the construction of specificity through interrelations rather than the imposition of boundaries and the counterposition of one identity *against* an other" (Massey 1994:7). Another geographer, Edward Soja, proposes thinking trialectically about spatiality and ontology (Soja 1996:70-82). He argues that with deconstruction of the predominant dualism,

the primacy of spatiality can emerge. However, he cautions against the concretization of spatial frameworks of any kind, adding that knowledge is not obtained in permanent constructions built around formalized and closed epistemologies, but "through an endless series of theoretical and practical approximations, a critical and inquisitive nomadism in which the journeying to new ground never ceases" (Soja 1996:82).

Perhaps this ambiguity or in-between aspect of place and space (among other concepts) is a basic perspective for analysis of spatial phenomena. Reminiscent of the binary categories presented here, Rodman observes that anthropologists seem to hold two opposing views of place: "place as...an anthropological construct for 'setting' or the localization of concepts and as...socially constructed, spatialized experience" (Rodman 2003:206). However, she acknowledges that both views, under the designation "lived space," can be compatible for the purpose of place studies, and she provides a possible resolution for their contradiction based on J. Nicholas Entrikin's work (Rodman 2003:206). Entrikin advocates for a position between the centered and subjective-experiential and decentered or objective-transcendent (Entrikin 1991:3). He asserts that from a point in between, it is possible to "gain a view from both sides of the divide. We gain a sense both of being 'in a place' and 'at a location,' of being at the center and being at a point in a centerless world" (Entrikin 1991:134). Although Entrikin's use of the terms "objective" and "center" may be problematic (see Rodman 1993:207-212), an approach that recognizes the ambiguity of spatial phenomena and the need to move past dichotomies is necessary, especially in light of the rest of this section.

Place, Time, and Histories[20]

In the previous pages, some of the quotations about space and place also referred to time. Ward and Rodman criticize the idea of representations of place as fixed and unchanging (Ward 2003:81-82; Rodman 2003:204-205). Ward believes that if place cannot be imbued with new meaning, it is rendered as timeless and unchanging (Ward 2003:82-83). In his categorization of spatial qualities, Tilley ascribes "atemporal" to abstract space and "temporal" to human space (Tilley 1994:8). Casey argues that place and time are interconnected as "the whole sedimented history of cultural and social influences and personal interests that compose my life-history" is located in place (Casey 2001a:404-405). So, there is certainly a relationship between spatial phenomena and temporal elements. In the following pages, the correlation between place and time will be explored. However, there are two caveats to this endeavor. The first is that several of the scholars cited here make use of the term "inscribed" (or similar phrases, like "written into the landscape") in their respective works to portray how past events are connected to places. This term has a connotation of engraving events into a blank slate, reminiscent of the modernist primacy of space paradigm. As this issue has already been covered, the purpose of including these sources is not to question if events can be seen as chiseled into an empty landscape but to highlight the interconnectedness between place, time, and histories. Secondly, time and place are intertwined in a complex and dynamic manner. To isolate these concepts, even to analyze them, can be problematic. As Soja writes about the disassembly of his theoretical framework for the purpose of analysis, "Anything which fragments Thirdspace into separate specialized knowledges or exclusive domains--even on the pretext of handling its infinite complexity--destroys its meaning and openness" (Soja 1996:56-57).

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[20] A detailed discussion of the process of history-making and epistemology is beyond the scope of this paper. For the purposes of the material presented here, I choose to base my understanding of "history" on Greg Dening's description: "History is all the ways we encode the past in symbol form to make a present...History is the texted past for which we have a cultural poetic. It is in that sense not all experience, but that part of it which is transformed into texts--texts written down, texts spoken, texts caught in the forms of material things...Each text has its [own] cultural and social system for being read" (Dening 1995:14).

However, with these cautionary points in mind, I will examine a selection of sources that supports the important connection between place and time.

Several anthropologists, philosophers, geographers, filmmakers, and others have described the interconnectedness of place and temporal concepts. In the article, "Aboriginal Relationships to the Land and Resources," Leroy Little Bear writes of the primacy of place to time: "Space, as opposed to time is the more important referent to us...In our Blackfoot ways, we celebrate Sundance. There is no fixed time to start such as 9 a.m., July 22. It is when we are ready. The important thing is that it always happens at the same place. For us place or space, not time, is the important concept" (Little Bear 1998:18). In the film, *Women in the Shadows*, Christine Welsh takes it upon herself to visit the places where her Native ancestors lived in order to gain a better understanding of past events and their life stories (Bailey 1991). In *A Forest of Time: American Indian Ways of History*, Peter Nabokov provides dozens of published examples that highlight the correlation between place or landscape and histories-temporal perception for various Native American peoples (Nabokov 2002:126-149). Nabokov cites Alfonso Ortiz who writes, "Historians need to develop a sensitivity to certain tribal traditions that have a bearing on a people's past, present, and aspirations for the future, to wit, on their history, which have no meaning apart from where they occur" (Ortiz 1977:20; Nabokov 2002:131-132).

In fact, despite the diversity among the world's ethnic groups, anthropologists have documented how a people's understanding of temporal events and their histories are connected to place. Filip De Boeck describes how among the Luunda in the rural southwest Congo, the *muyoomb* tree is the preferential method for the production of a historically-situated locality, "a *living* spatialised memory and link between past and present" (De Boeck 1998:25). De Boeck observes, "Through space, history is crystallised synchronically in each particular place, each particular village and, ultimately, in each particular elder, for time and space become intertwined in (and through) place: place is engendered by time and, therefore, always actual and synchronic" (De Boeck 1998:46). Christina Toren depicts how Fijians in the village of Sawaieke remark

on "the passing of time, often in terms of places and landmarks that function as reference points for the succession of events" (Toren 1995:163). She observes, "the awareness of 'time emplaced' renders the ancestral past not as a frozen, timeless, mythical domain, but as historical and dynamic," adding that changes in the present are made integral to the land so that the present becomes continuous with the ancestral past (Toren 1995:164). Howard Morphy details how for the Yolngu in Australia, "place has precedence over time in Yolngu cosmogeny. Time was created through the transformation of ancestral beings into place, the place being for ever the mnemonic of the event...In Yolngu terms they *turned into* the place" (Morphy 1995:188). Morphy also adds that the Yolngu learn about the ancestral past simply by moving through the landscape (Morphy 1995:196). Mark Nuttall explains how for the Inuit in Northwest Greenland, places become remembered places, a memoryscape, as "events, whether contemporary, historical, or mythical, that happen at certain points in the local area tend to become integral elements of those places" (Nuttall 1992:54). Indeed, "these events cannot be separated from the land even though place names do not immediately reflect such stories" (Nuttall 1992:54). Julie Cruikshank comments that when working with elders in the Yukon Territory and documenting their life histories, "I recorded stories of lives where a single year could often be mapped as a travel narrative" (Cruikshank 1998:17). She notes, "Repeatedly, women talked about time with reference to places in Athapaskan languages and sometimes not seen for years yet still providing anchors for memory" (Cruikshank 1998:17). Additionally, "by imbuing place with meaning through story, narrators seemed to be using locations in physical space to talk about events in chronological time...[thus] place names may provide a point of entry to the past" (Cruikshank 1990:347,354). Kathleen Stewart illustrates how the past *is* place for the residents of the hallows ("hollers") in West Virginia: "Imagine a history remembered not as the straight line of progress but as a flash of unforgettable images...identity, social history, and a sense of place can all be recounted together in a litany of *places* in the hills...(Stewart 1996:145,148). Keith Basso writes, "Long before the advent of

literacy, to say nothing of 'history' as an academic discipline, places served humankind as durable symbols of distant events and as indispensable aids for remembering and imagining them--and this convenient arrangement, ancient but not outmoded, is with us still today" (Basso 1996:7). Based on his experiences among the Western Apache, Keith Basso observes:

> The past is a well worn 'path' or 'trail'...which was traveled first by the people's founding ancestors and which subsequent generations of Apaches have traveled ever since. Beyond the memories of living persons, this path is no longer visible--the past has disappeared--and thus it is unavailable for direct consultation and study. For this reason, the past must be constructed--which is to say, imagined--with the aid of historical materials, sometimes called 'footprints' or 'tracks'...that have survived into the present. These materials come in various forms, including Apache place-names, Apache stories and songs, and different kinds of relics found at locations throughout Apache country...what matters most to Apaches is *where* events occurred, not when, and what they serve to reveal about the development and character of Apache social life. In light of these priorities, temporal considerations, though certainly not irrelevant, are accorded secondary importance[21] (Basso 1996:31).

Doreen Massey has also written on the relationship between temporal and spatial phenomena. Massey argues that we should not think of space as some kind of independent dimension, but rather as constructed out of social relations: the spatial is social relations "stretched out" (Massey 1994:2). As social relations are never still, space-time is "a configuration of social relations within which the specifically spatial may be conceived of as an inherently dynamic simultaneity" (Massey 1994:3). She adds, "One way of thinking about all this is to say that the spatial is integral to the production of history, and thus to the possibility of politics, just as the temporal is to geography. Another way is to insist on the inseparability of time and space, on their joint constitution through the interrelations between phenomena, on the necessity of thinking in

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[21] Basso explains, "Placeless events are an impossibility; everything that happens must happen somewhere. The location of an event is an integral aspect of the event itself, and identifying the event's location is therefore essential to properly depicting--and effectively picturing--the event's occurrence" (Basso 1996:86-87).

terms of space-time" (Massey 1993:159). Massey finds a parallel in her argument with some of the ideas advanced in modern physics. She writes that in modern physics, "the identity of things is constituted through interactions...velocity, acceleration and so forth are defined, [but] the basic ontological categories, such as space and time are not...space and time are inextricably interwoven. It is not that we cannot make any distinction at all between them but that the distinction we *do* make needs to hold the two in tension, and to do so within an overall, and strong, concept of four dimensionality" (Massey 1993:152). In addition, "positive definitions of both space and time must be interrelational...there is no absolute dimension: space. The existence of the spatial depends on the interrelation of objects: 'In order for 'space' to make an appearance there needs to be at least two fundamental particles' [Stannard 1989:33]...[Thus] space is not absolute, it is relational" (Massey 1993:152). Likewise, "it is not that the interrelations between objects occur *in* space and time; it is these relationships themselves which *create/define* space and time [Stannard 1989:33]" (Massey 1993:154).

Edward Soja offers another perspective on spatiality in his book *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* (1996). Soja proposes using an ontological trialectic that serves as "a statement of what the world must be like in order for us to have knowledge of it" (Soja 1996:71). The Trialectic of Being incorporates the smaller categories of Historicality, Sociality, and Spatiality together. Soja asserts that although this trialectic is primarily ontological, it applies at all levels of knowledge formation from ontology to epistemology, theory building, empirical analysis, and social practice (Soja 1996:70). He notes that there has been a persistent tendency in the past to over-privilege Historicality and Sociality with Spatiality peripheralized into the background as a "reflection, container, stage, environment or external constraint upon human behavior and social action" (Soja 1996:71). He describes how in building on the deconstruction of the dualism, spatiality is reasserted through the two openings in these dialectic structures:

> Sociality, both routinely and problematically, produces spatiality, and *vice versa*, putting to the forefront of critical

> inquiry a dynamic socio-spatial dialectic that by definition is also intrinsically historical. A similar trialectical logic infuses the spatio-temporal structuration of Sociality. Historicality and Spatiality, or more familiarly history and geography, intertwine in a simultaneously routine and problem-filled relation that evokes another crucial field of inquiry and interpretation in the spatio-temporal or geohistorical dialectic. The Trialectic of Being thus generates three ontological fields of knowledge formation from what so long has only been one (Historicality-Sociality). The three moments of the ontological trialectic thus contain each other; they cannot successfully be understood in isolation or epistemologically privileged separately...We are first and always historical-social-spatial beings, actively participating individually and collectively in the construction-production--the "becoming"--of histories, geographies, societies (Soja 1996:72-73).

Edward Casey has written extensively on place and as part of this body of work, the nature of place and time. Similar to Soja, Casey observes, "One very important dichotomy subject to the deconstructive power of place is that of space and time...the phenomenological fact of the matter is that *space and time come together in place*. Indeed, they arise from the experience of place itself" (Casey 1996:36). Thus, "space and time are contained in places rather than places in them...time and space are operative *in places* and are not autonomous presences or spheres of their own" (Casey 1996:44). He also believes that "time is an extension of the extensiveness of place itself as superimposed, or subincised, on time." In fact, "time is a place--its own kind of place" (Casey 1993:13;19). He argues that almost all philosophical theorizing about time is place-determined, for example St. Augustine's account for time that is imbued with the search for location: for "*the place of time*" (Casey 1993:20). Therefore, place can be seen to be constitutive of time and a factor in the phenomenon of time and its comprehension (Casey 1993:21): "there is *no (grasping of) time without place*": "time arises *from* places and passes (away) *between* them. It also vanishes *into* places at its edges and *as* its edges" (Casey 1993:21). Moreover, "Time and history, the diachronic media of culture, are so deeply inscribed in places as to be inseparable from them" (Casey

1996:44). In common with Soja's trialectic, Casey also acknowledges the role of place in histories and sociality:

> Place as we experience it is not altogether natural. If it were, it could not play the animating, decisive role it plays in our collective lives. Place, already cultural as experienced, insinuates itself into a collectivity, altering as well as constituting that collectivity. Place becomes social because it is already cultural. It is also, and for the same reason, historical. It is by the mediation of culture that places gain historical depth. We might even say that culture...afford[s] them a deep historicity, a *longue durée*, which they would lack if they were entirely natural in constitution (Casey 1993:31-32).

This comprehension of the connection between time and place is also crucial to our understanding of memory and histories. Casey reminds us that with a monolinear view of time, there is dispersal and disintegration as each moment arises and instantaneously disappears: there is no time that might be gathered up in memory and kept therein (Casey 1987:182). Yet as each experience occurs in place: "it is bound to place as to its own basis" (Casey 1987:182). The ancient Greeks realized this when they devised the "art of memory," a method of recollection whereby a given place or places acted as a grid onto which images of items to be remembered were placed in a certain order (Casey 1987:182-183). The subsequent remembering of these items occurred when one traversed the grid step-by-step in one's mind. (Casey 1987:183). Therefore, "we might even say that memory is naturally place-oriented or at least place-supported" (Casey 1987:186-187). Hence, Casey's statement that we must "come to heed the proper place of the remembered--its manner not just of occupying place, but of incorporating it into its own content" (Casey 1987:184). Indeed, "place is a keeper of memories--one of the main ways by which the past comes to be secured in the present, held in things before us and around us" (Casey 1987:213). He believes, "Moving in or through a given place, the body imports its own implaced past into its present experience: its 'local history' is literally a history of locales" (Casey 1987:194). It is because of this association between experienced and embodied place and time, we can recall past events instead as past places: "*In remembering we can*

be thrust back, transported, into the place we recall. We can be moved back into this place as much as, and sometimes more than, into the *time* in which the remembered event occurred. Rather than thinking of remembering as a form of re-experiencing the past *per se*, we might conceive of it as an activity of *re-implacing*: re-experiencing past places" (Casey 1987:201). Lastly, "[There is] an elective affinity between memory and place. Not only is each suited to the other; each calls for the other. What is contained in place is on its way to being well remembered. What is remembered is well grounded if it is remembered as being in a particular place--a place that may well take precedence over the time of its occurrence" (Casey 1987:214-215).

To conclude this subsection, a summary should be provided of the notable common qualities between the realms of place and histories. As Basso, Cruikshank, Casey, Soja and others have illustrated, place and histories are intertwined, and as Soja admonishes, cannot be understood in isolation or privileged individually (Soja 1996:72-73). Therefore, it is not surprising to find that many of the same characteristics applied to histories are familiar to place. Both place and histories share the qualities of being dynamic and of blending the present and past (Dening 1995:23-24; Casey 1987:201). Dening writes, "The texted Past is always beached in Presents that always re-invent it. It is never absolutely within the time of one culture: there is a joining as well as a division between Past and Present (Dening 1995:24). Casey argues for a similar concept with his description of place memory and how "we can be thrust back, transported, into the place we recall" (Casey 1987:201). Place and histories are also processual, interrelational, multivocal, and dialogic (Borofsky 1987; Neumann 1989; Basso 1996; Rodman 1993). Robert Borofsky's experiences of processual history-making among the Pukapukans and Klaus Neumann's description of the need for multivocal Tolai histories find commonality with Basso's portrayal of the process related to gaining wisdom and making sense of place with the Western Apache and Rodman's argument that anthropological constructions of place need to be multivocal and multilocal (Borofsky 1987:141-145; Neumann 1989:219-220; Basso 1996; Rodman

1993:214). Finally, place and histories can also be contested and riddled with issues related to power and representation, essentialism, stasis, boundaries, authenticity, and marginality (Alonso 1988; Neumann 1989; Massey 1994; Rodman 1993). Ana Maria Alonso notes how through the manipulation of voice, "monophonic narratives suppress the polyphony and contingency of historical action and interpretation, endowing one voice with the authority which accrues to the discourse [and] which appears to totalize" (Alonso 1988:36). Neumann addresses the issue of creating "a plural of histories" for the Tolai in Papua New Guinea (Neumann 1989:219-220). Massey relates how a place is often falsely conceived of as "bounded...a site of an authenticity...singular, fixed and unproblematic in its identity" when its identity is "unfixed, contested...multiple" and "open and porous" (Massey 1994:5). Rodman recommends using multilocality and multivocality as a means to address issues of representation and to express "polysemic meanings of place for different users" (Rodman 1993:212). These commonalties are not exclusive, but they serve to highlight some of the similarities as I continue with a discussion of place, self, and communities.

Place, Self,[22] *and Communities*[23]

In the previous subsection, the quotations of Soja and Massey referred to the connection between place and social concepts, including self and communities. Soja asserts, "Sociality, both routinely and problematically, produces spatiality, and *vice versa*, putting to the forefront of critical inquiry a

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[22] For the purposes of this thesis, "self" denotes the basic level of "the human subject situated and oriented in place" (Casey 2001b:683). A much more detailed analysis of formation of personal identity could be included, but for the purposes of this thesis, only a basic place-based understanding of self is touched upon.

[23] I am using "community" not in a geographical nor structural sense but symbolically, emphasizing what people have in common, what they value, what is important to them, what distinguishes them from other groups, and the capacity of the group to make meaning: the "community as a phenomenon that has a complexity of cultural symbols" that can be used to make meaning for the community or to provide the community with the way to express them (Nuttall 1992:8; Cohen 1985:12,19; Blu 1996:216-218). Karen Blu demonstrates in her work that what is meant by "community" and how the term is used in the construction of group identity varies from one ethnic group to another. Some groups place more value on the built environment and physical features of a geographical location while others consider community to be defined by human relations (Blu 1996:216-218).

dynamic socio-spatial dialectic" that entails that we "are first and always historical-social-spatial beings, actively participating individually and collectively in the construction/production--the 'becoming'--of histories, geographies, societies" (Soja 1996:72-73). As cited earlier, Massey argues that we should not think of space as some independent dimension, but rather as constructed out of social relations, that the spatial is social relations "stretched out" (Massey 1994:2). Indeed, "there is no getting away from the fact that the social is inexorably also spatial...Thus, the spatial is socially constituted...'Space' is created out of...the networks of relations at every scale from local to global" (Massey 1993:155-156). However, before examining this social aspect of place at a level such as communities or societies, it would be beneficial to begin with an overview of the dynamic between place and self. Again, as a cautionary note, in structuring this subsection into *Place, Self, and Communities* and separating it from the previous *Place, Time, and Histories*, it imposes boundaries and creates division in a complex entity that is inherently holistic (Soja 1996:56-57). Some scholars also suggest that the role of place in humanity cannot be reduced to disparate fields of "the social, the natural or the cultural" (Cresswell 2004:31; Sack 1997:2; Malpas 1999:35-36). J.E. Malpas asserts, "the social does not exist prior to place nor is it given expression except in and through place...It is within the structure of place that the very possibility of the social arises" (Malpas 1999:36). With these perspectives in mind, I will explore a collection of sources that support the interrelation between place, self, and communities, beginning with the individual and place.

"*To be is to be in place...there is no being without place*": this is Casey's rendition of Archytas' message (Casey 1993:14). Casey reminds us that by virtue of being emplaced and using our perception, perception that is both constituted and constitutive,[24] "this dialectic means that we are never without emplaced experiences" (Casey 1996:19). Thus, "we are not only *in* places but

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[24] Constituted: "constituted by cultural and social structures that sediment themselves into the deepest level of perception" and constitutive: "this is especially evident when we perceive places: our immersion in them is not subjection to them, since we may modify their influence even as we submit to it" (Casey 1996:18-19).

of them," (Casey 1996:19). And to be emplaced and to have experiences in a place is to generate knowledge, for local knowledge "is at one with lived experience if it is indeed true that this knowledge is of the localities in which the knowing subject lives. To live is to live locally, and to know is first of all to know the places one is in" (Casey 1996:18). This knowledge can also include self-knowledge, for place has the ability to "direct and stabilize us, to memorialize and identify us, to tell us who and what we are in terms of *where we are*" (Casey 1993:xv). Therefore, "our innermost sense of personal identity...deeply reflects our implacement" (Casey 1993:307):

> Personal identity is no longer a matter of sheer self-consciousness but now involves intrinsically an awareness of one's place--a specifically geographical awareness. Any effort to assess the relationship between self and place should point not just to reciprocal influence (that much any ecologically sensitive account would maintain) but, more radically, to constitutive co-ingredience: each is essential to the being of the other.[25] In effect, there is *no place without self; and no self without place* (Casey 2001a:405-406).

Casey proposes a theory for the process that facilitates this co-constitution of place and self based on Pierre Bordieu's *habitus* from *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (1977). In Casey's view, habitus[26] is a "settled disposition or 'habitude' [that] is thus the basis for action in any given sphere--indeed, in any given place" (Casey 2001b:686). The self is "constituted by a core of habitudes that incorporate and continue, at both psychical and physical levels, what one has experienced in particular places" (Casey 2001b:686). But habitus is only part of the process. When humans put habitus into action, "the activation of habitus expresses an intentional and invested *commitment to the place-*

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[25] This idea of reciprocal influence is similar to Basso's *interanimation*, an experience of sensing places that is reciprocal and dynamic: "Places animate the ideas and feelings of persons who attend to them, these same ideas and feelings animate the places on which attention has been bestowed, and the movements of this process--inward toward facets of the self, outward toward aspects of the external world, alternately both together--cannot be known in advance (Basso 1996:107).

[26] According to Casey, habitus serves as a figure of the between: "between nature and culture, but also between consciousness and body, self and other, mechanism and teleology, determinism and freedom, even memory and imagination" (Casey 2001b:686).

world" (Casey 2001b:687). If habitus is the internalization of social practices in its origin, in its actual performance a given habitus is also "a reaching out to place, a being or becoming in place" (Casey 2001b:687). According to Casey, this active commitment to place is called habitation, and the self relates to the place of habitation "by means of concerted bodily movements that are the activation of habitudinal schemes, their explication and exfoliation in the inhabited place-world" (Casey 2001b:687). This results in a process of internalization and re-externalization:

> If habitus represents a movement from the externality of established customs and norms to the internality of durable dispositions, habitation is a matter of re-externalization--of taking the habitus that has already been acquired and continually re-enacting it in the place-world. Just as there would be no habitus without the preexisting places of history and society, so there would be no habitation without the habitudes that make implacement possible for a given subject (Casey 2001b:687).

In addition, another element comes into play in this process, the "vehicle" in this world that is "not only perceived or conceived but actively *lived* and receptively *experienced*": the body is this vehicle of being-in-place (Casey 2001b:687). Casey describes how the body not only goes out to meet the place-world in a myriad of "highly differentiated and culturally-freighted ways," it also bears the traces of the places it has known (Casey 2001b:688). He argues that the body is shaped by the places it has come to know "by a special kind of placial incorporation that is just as crucial to the human self as is the interpersonal incorporation so central to classical psychoanalytical theory" (Casey 2001b:688). Furthermore, places come into the body lastingly: "there is an *impressionism of place* by which the presence of a place remains lodged in our body long after we have left it"[27] (Casey 2001b:688). Therefore:

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[27] Casey states that neither habitus nor habitation adequately capture this persistence of place in the body: "places become embedded in us; they become part of our very self, our enduring character that we enact and carry forward" (Casey 2001b:688). He writes, "Where habitus internalizes the collective subject of customary and normative structure, and habitation calls for the intentional subject of concerted action, then idiolocality invokes the subject who incorporates

> We are still, even many years later, *in the places to which we are subject* because (and to the exact extent that) *they are in us*. They are in us--indeed, *are us*--thanks to their incorporation into us by a process of somatization whose logic is yet to be discovered...To be (a) subject to/of place is to *be what we are as an expression of the way a place is* (Casey 2001b:688).

J.E. Malpas also provides some insight into the complicated realm of place and self. Although he takes a slightly different perspective on place than Casey, favoring an approach that is more ontological than phenomenological, Malpas also believes that who we are reflects where we are. In *Place and Experience: a Philosophical Topography*, he asserts, "subjectivity cannot be grasped independently of a larger structure[28] that encompasses other subjects as well as the objects and events of the world" (Malpas 1999:175). It is within "the dense structure of place that subjectivity...and the possibility of thought and experience...is embedded" (Malpas 1999:175). Certainly, "the very identity of subjects, both in terms of their self-definition and their identity as grasped by others, is inextricably bound to the particular places in which they find themselves and in which others find them...it is only within the overarching structure of place as such that subjectivity as such is possible" (Malpas 1999:176). Malpas sees subjectivity as a framework that is embedded in a world of other subjects and objects, and it arises from "the way in which the

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and expresses a particular place...its *idios*...what is 'peculiar' in both senses of this last word" (Casey 2001b:688-689).

[28] Although Malpas uses the term "structure" and "framework" frequently in his work, he does not conceive of place as an "empty, purely formal notion" (Malpas 2001:233). Instead, place is constituted through an interplay of elements and "possesses a structure that consists in the internal articulation of those elements" (Malpas 2001:233). According to Malpas, it is possible to "map out" the basic "topographical framework" that can be discerned in every place (Malpas 2001:234). This becomes important when one looks at the "structure of experience" since "it is not just that particular places give a certain character to our lives and experiences, but rather that the topographical framework that is the structure of place...is also determinate of those lives and experiences" (Malpas 2001:234). To Malpas, "the ontology of place and the ontology of experience turn out to be almost identical" (Malpas 2001:234). This idea of structure is not "something imposed on or additional to the actual phenomena at issue" but is intended "to capture something of the dynamic and relational constitution of place, including the interrelation between places, between place and experience, and between place and a number of other fundamental concepts" (Malpas 2001:235). Interestingly, while Casey affirms that places can have some inherent structures of their own, he does not agree with Malpas that place itself is an "overarching structure" (Casey 2001c:229).

mental life of the subject is dependent on...[her] active engagement with...[her] surrounding environment and so on its situatedness within a particular place" (Malpas 1999:177). Thus, self-conceptualization and the conceptualization of place are "interdependent elements" within the "overarching structure of place," which results in the "dependence of self-identity on particular places" (Malpas 1999:177):

> Particular places enter into our self-conception and self-identity inasmuch as it is only in, and through our grasp of, the places in which we are situated that we can encounter objects, other persons or, indeed, ourselves...we are the sort of thinking, remembering, experiencing creatures we are only in virtue of our active engagement in place; that the possibility of mental life is necessarily tied to such engagement, and so to the places in which we are so engaged; and that, when we come to give content to our concepts of ourselves and to the idea of our own self-identity place and locality play a crucial role--our identities are, one can say, intricately and essentially place-bound (Malpas 1999:177).

Malpas also argues that our self-identity and conceptualization of ourselves and others is something that can only be worked out in relation to place--and our active engagement in place--whether or not we explicitly recognize this fact (Malpas 1999:178). Although self-identity is not "tied to any simple location within some purely static space," he notes that the search for a sense of self-identity is often presented in terms of a search for place (Malpas 1999:178). Malpas cites Sally Morgan's experiences in her autobiography *My Place* (1987) as an example of this phenomenon. Morgan's search to uncover her family history and Aboriginal heritage leads her back to the region of Australia from where her family came. In a passage that combines the physical landscape, the emotions associated with being in the place of her ancestors, kinship connections, and issues of identity, Morgan describes her acceptance of her Aboriginal heritage in terms of a return home and a recovery of a sense of place[29] (Morgan 1987:228-230; Malpas 1999:178-179). This is similar in many

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[29] "Mum and I sat down on part of the old fence and looked across to the distant horizon. We were both trying to imagine what it would have been like for the people in the old days. Soft, blue hills completely surrounded the station. They seemed to us mystical and magical. We

ways to Christine Welsh's return to the places of her ancestors in a quest to gain an understanding of herself as a Metis person (Bailey 1991). After journeying to the Qu'Appelle Valley and to York Factory, talking to her father about their Metis heritage while sitting on a hill outside Lebret, and bringing her son to the cemetery to see the graves of her ancestors, Welsh states, "I think my search for my Native grandmothers has been a search for a place of my own. A place where I felt I belonged and in a very real sense this journey has brought me home" (Bailey 1991:[51:44-51:58]).

Let us now broaden our analysis slightly to examine the relationship between community and place and present a selection of specific examples of the way this has been characterized. Casey observes that a place determines "not only *where* I am...but *how* I am together with others...and even *who* we shall become together...implacement is as social as it is personal...it is also collective in character" (Casey 1993:23). Basso also asserts that places are most often lived in the company of other people and sensed together. It is on these communal occasions--when places are sensed together--that community views of places can become accessible to others (Basso 1996:109). In addition, because collective groups such as communities are often based upon extended families, the sense of belonging to place within a community is also intertwined with issues of kinship and belonging in terms of kin networks (Nuttall 1992; Stewart 1996; Kahn 1996; Cruikshank 1990,1998). Kathleen Stewart writes about how "*ways of talkin*" and "*ways of doin*" become metacultural markers for the communities in the hills and hallows ("hollers") of West Virginia, as communal identity, community histories, and a sense of place are enmeshed with places in the hills (Stewart 1996:137,148). Stewart illustrates how the constant "social rituals of placing people" and the continual remembering of

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easily imagined Nan, Arthur, Rosie, Lily, and Albert sitting exactly as we were now, looking off into the horizon at the end of the day. Dreaming, thinking. 'This is a beautiful place,' Mum sighed. I nodded in agreement. 'Why did she tell me it was an ugly place? She didn't want me to come. She just doesn't want to be Aboriginal.' We both sat in silence...We all felt very emotional when we left from Doris' house...We kissed everyone goodbye and headed off towards Nullagine. Mum and I were both a bit teary. Nothing was said, but I knew she felt like I did. Like

named places in the hills and their associated stories contribute to this social imaginary for the community (Stewart 1996:137). In common with Keith Basso's account of the Western Apache, Stewart remarks on how a sense of place is intertwined with understandings of who a person is[30] and provides community members with a means to comprehend their world and search for meaningfulness (Stewart 1996:151-153).

In a similar vein, Miriam Kahn writes that for the people of Wamira in New Guinea, their landscape resounds with narratives of collective and personal experience that provide anchors for memory and express messages about social values and acceptable behavior, belonging, and identity (Kahn 1996:167-168). The meanings connected to the Wamiran landscape through stories, place names, myths, and rituals crystallize into shared symbols and link the people to a sense of common history and identity (Kahn 1996:168). Kahn describes how in Wamira, people are placed in terms of locality and kinship together;[31] places also act as metaphors and moral lessons about the importance of social relations and obligations for community members (Kahn 1996:173-179). Social interactions and relationships at all levels contribute to a Wamiran sense of place (Kahn 1996:194). The landscape "surrounds the people with a sense of shared history...[and] it provides a focus for feelings of common identity as well as a charter for moral action" (Kahn 1996:178). Lastly, she notes that Wamiran clans "claim identity and gain rights through their association with specific places in the landscape that are marked by stones" and illustrates how through her own act of building a permanent structure in the

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we'd suddenly come home and now we were leaving again. But we had a sense of place now" (Morgan 1987:228-230).

[30] Stewart includes the story about the community member stationed overseas in the 1970s who "caught himself staring out the kitchen window at the lone dandelion in the yard and, hillbilly that he was, it was all he could do to keep from *showin' hisself* by running out and plucking it to eat" (Stewart 1996:153).

[31] In Kahn's account, she is "adopted" by one of the women in the village and is asked repeatedly by other villagers where she is from, to which clan she belongs, and who her mother is. When she answers correctly, the villagers nod with approval and say "*Ata dobu*...our [inclusive] place." She notes "To be without a place is to exist humiliatingly outside the bounds of sociality" (Kahn 1996:173,180). She observes that by the end of her stay in Wamira, she had "become Wamiran by literally becoming a part of Wamira...when landmarks of my experiences shaped the Wamirans' landscape and triggered their thoughts and feelings" (Kahn 1996:188).

village, she had also "cemented" her relationships, obligations, memories of herself, and place as a member of the community (Kahn 1996:184,190-193).

Karen Blu depicts how the Lumbees in North Carolina also have complex understandings of community identity and place (Blu 1996). As Indians without reservation lands, the Lumbee sense of community[32] and place arises from social relationships and kinship networks rather than on built structures, physical features of the land, or defined borders: it is the quality of human relations that defines place (Blu 1996:216). Thus, Lumbees who meet for the first time ask questions about from where each person hails and what their family connections are. Blu observes, "the connections [assumed]...between family name, kinship group, and geographic locale are commonly accepted ones" (Blu 1996:205-206). These questions of place and kinship are returned to again and again until satisfactorily answered as "'being placed' in the landscape communicate[s] much about social identity and social life...it reveals something about likely economic and social status, about possible kinship ties, about interconnections with the non-Indian world, about the community's role in the history of the Indian people, and about probable political positions (Blu 1996:201,214). Blu states that the relationship the Lumbees have with Robeson County is exemplified by "visually vague"[33] communities that remain pivotal to the Lumbees' sense of peoplehood and ethnicity. In Lumbee perception, Robeson County "stands for the heart of their homeland"; it is their "homeplace" (Blu 1996:223). According to Blu, "For Lumbees...an origin place, or a place where one 'belongs' is considered a vital part of personhood...it is a fundamental part of their identity as a 'nation,' 'tribe,' or 'group'" (Blu 1996:223). Indeed, "For Lumbees and other Native Americans, the attachment to a particular place or set of places is necessary, not optional, for their group identity. It defines them as particular peoples" (Blu 1996:224).

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[32] Blu states that the term "community" itself has multiple referents for the Lumbees. It can refer to vaguely-defined local areas or in a more encompassing way for the Lumbee people as a whole (Blu 1996:198).

For the people in the Kangersuatsiaq area of northwest Greenland, Mark Nuttall writes that through memory and experience, and the cultural construction of the landscape, "an image of the community is reflected in the landscape. The community boundaries[34] are extended into abstract space that then becomes an integral part of the community. Places in this area resonate with community consciousness" (Nuttall 1992:57). Individual emplaced experiences that occur on a daily basis all contribute to the creation of a community landscape that is "alive with recollection...a living place" (Nuttall 1992:58). An image of a totality emerges, "a landscape that belongs to the community precisely because it is continually constructed" and "is revealed in contours of the cognitive map used by individuals to orient themselves and their sense of community in relation to it" (Nuttall 1992:58).

Keith Basso also illustrates the connection between communities and place based on his experiences among the Western Apache of Cibecue. For the Western Apache, "the people's sense of place, their sense of their tribal past, and their vibrant sense of themselves are inseparably intertwined" (Basso 1996:35). Basso observes that in Cibecue, "constructions of place reach deeply into other cultural spheres, including conceptions of wisdom,[35] notions of morality, politeness and tact in forms of spoken discourse,[36] and certain conventional ways of imagining and interpreting the Apache tribal past" (Basso 1996:xv). In his ethnography, Basso presents stories about places and place names that highlight their use and meaning beyond that of serving as a method of conceptualizing and re-presenting the Apache histories. Significant places

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[33] Blu remarks that this indistinctness was an asset for the Lumbees as the low visibility became a source of potential strength and resistance: a means to evade attempts by those with greater power to control Indian people and their lands (Blu 1996:198,218).

[34] Julie Cruikshank also observes that many communities in the Yukon have documented the extent to which territories near their communities have been used in the past and continue to be used by certain families in the present based on place names: "Named places can thus be transformed from sites of significance to authorized boundary markers demarcating neighbouring groups" (Cruikshank 1998:20).

[35] Basso describes how the Western Apache strive to cultivate wisdom through the knowledge of place names and their associated narratives and the application of this knowledge in their own lives (Basso 1996:111-149).

[36] This is "speaking with names," a practice of using place names to subtly comment on the actions of others while also providing support and offering advice (Basso 1996:100).

can reinforce Apache values such as the importance of community and kin, draw attention to social norms and acceptable ways of behavior, and provide cautionary examples of what may happen when people do not "think sensibly and do what is right" (Basso 1996:23-29). Apache place names and their associated stories are conceptualized as constantly "stalking people" and can be used by a member of the community to encourage an appropriate manner of conduct in her own life or in the lives of others. To "shoot someone with an arrow" is to direct a historical tale to a social offender to affect a change in his actions[37] (Basso 1996:37-41,55-62). Indeed, place stories are "'about' what it means to be a Western Apache or...what it is that being an Apache should normally and properly entail" (Basso 1996:52):

> One forms the impression that Apaches view the landscape as a repository of distilled wisdom, a stern but benevolent keeper of tradition, an ever-vigilant ally in the efforts of individuals and whole communities to maintain a set of standards for social living that is uniquely and distinctly their own. In the world that the Western Apaches have constituted for themselves, features of the landscape have become symbols of a culture and the enduring moral character of its people (Basso 1996:62-63).

Before I conclude this subsection on place, self, and communities, it is worthwhile to summarize some of the main points presented here. As Casey, Malpas and others affirm, place is "the first of all things." Whether conceptualizing place-making or being-in-place from a phenomenological or perhaps more ontological perspective, "it is within...place that the very possibility of the social arises" (Malpas 1999:36). Building on the assertion that "there is no being without place," Casey argues that to be emplaced and to have experiences in a certain place is to generate knowledge, including self-knowledge, as personal identity (or knowing who we are) reflects emplacement

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[37] Basso adds that the Western Apache believe that if the lessons of the tale are taken to heart by the target person, the individual will form a lasting bond with the place mentioned in the story, a connection that even outlasts the life of the person who shot the arrow (Basso 1996:55,59). Many Apache think of the land as looking after them and teaching them how to live right, and they caution that people who don't know the stories or who move away from the area "forget how to live right, forget how to be strong" (Basso 1996:38-39).

(Casey 1993:14,307). Personal identity is a matter of awareness of one's place, and it is the "constitutive co-ingredience" of place and self that allows Casey to declare that "there is no place without self; and no self without place" (Casey 2001a:406). Like Casey, Malpas views self-conceptualization and conceptualization of place as interdependent. Malpas agrees that subjectivity cannot be grasped independently of place and that it is within place that subjectivity, thought, experience, and identity are contained (Malpas 1999:175-176). Emplacement and the "active engagement" with the surrounding environment play a crucial part in the creation and understanding of identity (Malpas 1999:177).

These views can be broadened to a more macro level to understand the fundamental role of place in the construction and meaning of community. Place is collective in character: it is "not only *where* I am...but *how* I am together with others...and even *who* we shall become together" (Casey 1993:23). The ethnographic examples provided here attest to the interconnectedness of place, kinship, shared histories, and community identities. A common thread of these ethnographies is the realization that emplaced experiences and actions by members of the community (past or present) are remembered, can become meaningful, and as "histories," can and do contribute to a sense of community and place. Kahn details how the Wamiran landscape is rich in meaning for the community and through myth, narrative, and place names, it connects villagers to a sense of communal history and identity (Kahn 1996:168). Basso writes that the Western Apache sense of place, sense of their tribal past, and sense of themselves are intertwined (Basso 1996:35). From these ethnographic examples and the theory of Casey, Malpas, Soja and others, Basso's assertion is valid: what people make of their places is closely connected to what they make of themselves as members of society and inhabitants of the earth (Basso 1996:7). This interconnection between place, histories, and communities means that place-making is more than a way of constructing the past, it is also how people construct social traditions, personal and social identities. As Basso

emphasizes, "We *are*, in a sense, the place-worlds we imagine" (Basso 1996:7).

Given this documented interconnection between personal and social identities and place, it is not surprising to find that concepts of ethnic identity and experiences of place share many common qualities. Both place-making and construction of an ethnic identity are perceived as fluid and dynamic processes (Nagata 1974:333; Barth 1969:13; Harms 2000:18; Massey 1994:3; Basso 1996:7). Like an experiential sense of place, the process of ethnic identity formation can be collaborative, context-dependent, and multiple (Nagata 1974; Barth 1969; Harms 2000). Ethnicity has been depicted as a process-focused, cooperative social activity, similar in many respects to community place-making, through which questions of identity can be answered (Barth 1969:13; Harms 2000:15). Ethnicity is also context-dependent and multiple: ethnic identities can vary contextually and individuals can utilize them for different purposes at various times, if it is strategically beneficial and culturally and personally possible (Barth 1969:13,22; Harms 2000:42-43,48-49; Nagata 1974:333,340). Experiences of place are also obviously context-dependent, as Geertz remarks, "no one lives in the world in general" (Geertz 1996:262), and they are multiple as Rodman emphasizes (Rodman 2003:210-212). Finally, as ethnic identity is "meaningfully related to culture in a significant way" (Barth 1969:15), so is place-making "a form of *cultural* activity" (Basso 1996:7), for culture "exists more concretely and completely in places than in minds or signs"[38] (Casey 1996:33).

Conclusion: Place and Further Considerations

So, what is place and how can we conceptualize it? In depicting spatiality as a "Thirdspace,"[39] Soja writes, "Everything comes together in Thirdspace:

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[38] Casey observes that the word culture meant "place tilled" in Middle English and that the root of the word is *colere* in Latin: "to inhabit, care for, worship." Thus, "to be cultural, to have a culture is to inhabit a place sufficiently intensely to cultivate it--to be responsible for it, to respond to it, to attend to it caringly. Where else but in particular places can culture take root?" (Casey 1996:33-34)

[39] Soja also describes Thirdspace as "a knowable and unknowable, real and imagined lifeworld of experiences, emotions, events, and political choices that is existentially shaped by the

subjectivity and objectivity, the abstract and the concrete, the real and the imagined, the knowable and the unimaginable, the repetitive and the differential, structure and agency, mind and body, consciousness and the unconscious, the disciplined and the transdisciplinary, everyday life and unending history" (Soja 1996:56-57). But in saying "everything" comes together in place, perhaps this casts the net too wide for the purposes of this study. Even working from the understanding of place as process, processes generally have qualities that facilitate their analysis. So, although scholars Casey and Malpas assert that place cannot correspond to a definite list of predicates, save for those necessary for context (Casey 2001c:226), a short summary of some key characteristics and conceptualizations of place is in order.

As was mentioned in the beginning of this section, place has often been conceptualized as a static and fixed setting for the peoples represented in ethnographies of the past (Ward 2003:81-82; Rodman 2003:204-205). Qualities of timeless, rooted, and bounded have also been ascribed to places based on an understanding of places as a "constant and natural 'reality'" against which events unfold (Ward 2003:82). This view of places as immutable and stable continues to exist in varying forms in contemporary ethnographies as Casey observes that even more recent anthropological writing starts from the premise that human experience begins with space (stasis, objective, atemporal) which becomes culturalized and meaningful place through processual forces (Casey 1996:13). Thus, the "constant and natural 'reality,'" the backdrop of space that provides the setting for the processual actions of place-making to render it meaningful can still be found in more recent ethnographies and explanations of place theory (Weiner 1991; Myers 1991; Tilley 1994; Hirsch 1995; Tuan 2001).

Many scholars have formulated understandings of place based on a place-space dichotomy. Tilley sketches out categories of "Abstract Space" (container, external, coherence, substantial) and "Human Space" (medium,

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generative and problematic interplay between centers and peripheries, the abstract and concrete, the impassioned spaces of the conceptual and the lived, marked out materially and metaphorically in *spatial praxis*, the transformation of (spatial) knowledge into (spatial) action in a field of unevenly developed (spatial) power" (Soja 1996:31).

internal, contradiction, relational), observing that space in the abstract sense was previously viewed as the rational approach to studying spatial phenomena but now it is perceived as irrational idealism (Tilley 1994:8). Hirsch's concept of landscape also relies upon a dualism of foreground, place, and image against background, space, and representation. Hirsch asserts these are not actually binary opposites but perspectives and transitions within a single relationship as part of a cultural process (Hirsch 1995:4-6). Tuan's view of cosmos and hearth is analogous as he uses these two devices to represent the local and familiar (hearth) and the abstract and impersonal (cosmos), while he also notes that these opposites ideally overlap and that both are necessary to the development of humanity (Tuan 2001:319,321). Rodman observes that anthropologists tend to hold two opposing views of place: one as a setting and the other as spatialized experience (Rodman 2003:206). Yet, like Tuan and Hirsch, she believes that using an approach based on Entrikin, who argues for an understanding of place from "in-between" the experiential and transcendent, it is possible to gain a broader comprehension of "lived space" (Rodman 2003:206; Entrikin 1991:3,134).

However, many authors object to the use of a binary framework to conceptualize space and place or even to the use of any categories at all. Casey argues that space and place are two different orders of reality that cannot be compared, nor can place be derived from space by some sort of genealogy (Casey 2001a:404-405). Massey also contends that we need to challenge the use of polarized dichotomies and instead look at the role of interrelations in constructing specificity (Massey 1994:6-7). Soja calls for an end to thinking dualistically and to avoid a concretization of spatial frameworks as knowledge of spatial phenomena cannot be gained in permanent constructions built around formalized and closed epistemologies but rather through an endless series of theoretical approximations (Soja 1996:82).

In terms of place, time, and histories, the material presented previously emphasizes the interconnectedness of place and temporality. Massey insists on the inseparability of time and space, as they are jointly constituted through

interrelations between phenomena (Massey 1993:159). Soja notes that Historicality and Spatiality "intertwine in a...routine and problem-filled relation": by thinking trialectically the historical, spatial, and social are incorporated together (Soja 1996:72-73). Casey writes that not only are space and time contained in places and arise from the experience of place itself, there is no understanding of time without place (Casey 1996:36,44; Casey 1993:21). Because of this primacy of place over time, he asserts that memory of past events is place-supported and that the remembering of past events is actually a re-experiencing of past places (Casey 1987:186-187,201). This view that memory is place-supported finds corroboration in the ethnographic examples of De Boeck, Toren, Nuttall, and others as well as in the assertions of Little Bear and Ortiz that place is the most important referent for Aboriginal peoples and that histories have no meaning apart from where they occur (De Boeck 1998; Toren 1995; Nuttall 1992; Morphy 1995; Stewart 1996; Little Bear 1998:18; Ortiz 1977:20). Indeed, Basso's depiction of Western Apache conceptions of the past as a "path" or "trail" and his contention that place-making is a way of constructing the past and a means of doing human history illustrates how fundamentally connected places and histories are (Basso 1996:7,31). Thus, with the interconnectedness of time, histories, and place, it is not surprising to find that place and histories share many common qualities, such as being dynamic, processual, and dialogic as well as affected by issues pertaining to representation, essentialism, boundaries, authenticity, and marginality (Casey 1987; Dening 1995; Borofsky 1987; Neumann 1989; Basso 1996; Rodman 1993; Alonso 1988; Massey 1994).

This interconnectedness of place and time-histories also extends to an interrelation between place and self-communities. Soja notes that as historical-social-spatial beings we are always participating both individually and collectively in the production of histories, geographies, and societies (Soja 1996:72-73). Massey contends that the spatial is socially constituted (Massey 1994:2), while Basso argues that place-making is a way of constructing social traditions, and personal and social identities (Basso 1996:7). To Basso,

knowledge of places is linked to knowledge of the self and who one is as a person (Basso 1996:34). Casey, who also affirms that to be emplaced is to generate local knowledge, asserts that there is no place without self, and no self without place (Casey 1996:18; Casey 2001a:405-406). Casey also provides a theory for this co-constitution of place and self with an explanation as to why places remain with us for years (Casey 2001b:686-688). In common with these insights, Malpas declares that it is within the structure of place that the possibility of the social arises, resulting in identities that are intricately and inextricably place-bound (Malpas 1999:36,176-177). The ethnographic sources cited here also support this connection between a sense of identity, community, and place. Whether it's the "hollers" of West Virginia, the desert around Cibecue, the beaches of Wamira in New Guinea, Kangersuatsiaq in Greenland, Robeson County in North Carolina or the forests in the Yukon, the centrality of place, in association with kinship, to a sense of self-identity, communal histories, and a sense of community is evident (Stewart 1996; Basso 1996; Kahn 1996; Nuttall 1992; Blu 1996; Cruikshank 1990). Lastly, inasmuch as histories and place share many similar qualities, so too do constructions of place and conceptualizations of ethnicity: both are fluid, dynamic, processual, meaningful, reciprocal, context-dependent, and multiple (Barth 1969; Harms 2000; Nagata 1974; Casey 1996; Casey 2001a; Basso 1996; Rodman 2003).

As quoted in the beginning of this section, geographer Edward Soja writes that there is a greater need for awareness of collectively-created spatiality than ever before to make "theoretical and practical sense of our contemporary life-worlds at all scales" (Soja 1996:1-2). Anthropologists Basso, Kahn, Ward, and Rodman note the lack of attention to place in previous anthropological works: place has been neglected or conspicuously absent--a monologically depicted setting for peoples and their cultures (Basso 1996:105-106; Kahn 1996:168; Ward 2003:81,85; Rodman 2003:204-205). However, place is once again becoming "the first of all things" in terms of anthropological study. With globalization, displacement, migration, contested places, shared places, and other issues highlighting a world of movement and flux rather than

one of rootedness and isolation, an anthropology of place (and discussions of approaches to this work)[40] becomes increasingly necessary. Ward observes that current anthropological formulations of place-making and creation of identities as shifting and dynamic processes that allow for displacement and reattachment to place holds promise as a means of examining the "being and becoming" of people and places[41] (Ward 2003:86-87). Basso reflects about lived topographies that "much remains to be learned" (Basso 1996:111). This sentiment is also affirmed by Gupta and Ferguson, who observe that although there is much to be done, this is a time of enormous possibilities (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:26). As Basso writes, "Places and their sensings deserve our close attention. To continue to neglect them would be foolish and shortsighted. Intriguing discoveries await us, and the need to consider them thoughtfully grows stronger every day" (Basso 1996:111).

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[40] Rodman stresses the need for multilocality and multivocality approaches to place, while Ward recommends plurilocality or "an attention to the particularities which stretch across time and space" (Rodman 2003:210-212,218; Ward 2003:93).

[41] For Ward this includes individuals who hold multiple attachments to lived-in, remembered, and imagined places as well as a multiplicity of identity as "the nature of who or what one experiences oneself to be, shifts depending on where the self is placed—both by oneself and by others—in geographical, social, cultural and natural terms" (Ward 2003:86-87).

æn nistwayr: "Crooked Lake"

It was a lovely day in May 2002, and I was driving out to Crooked Lake with my great-aunt to tend graves. She had made two new wreaths, one for my father and one for her father; so with the wreaths in the trunk of my old Pontiac, we headed out from Regina for the hour-plus drive to the valley. I was looking forward to the trip for two reasons. First, it gave me a chance to get to know my great-aunt better because I had only met her recently, and we had a lot of catching up to do. The other reason was because I was finally going out there with someone who could show me where my ancestors used to live. I know where they are resting now, but where they lived…that was another matter. The signs of their houses and their community are long gone.

After we had seen to the graves, we drove around the valley and every place she gazed upon sparked memories. For the first of many times that day, I wished I could see the things she was seeing when she looked out on the land. The hills were thick with memories of people and buildings only she could envision, and I listened intently as the stories revealed themselves. I asked about the old bridge and was told, "Grandpa used to have a little store on the other side with a pool hall, that's mom's parents." She pointed to bare and empty lands on the sides of the road, grasses waving in the breeze, and told me the names of everyone who used to live there and how they were related to her. And as she looked upon the hill on the north side of the valley, she mused, "We climbed that hill a thousand times, I bet, if not more…we used to climb up there to just sit there and look around." She reminisced about her father's house, about the times she went fishing or walked to dances held miles away, and all of the stories were a tapestry of the valley, histories, and kinship.

Then we drove to the place my grandparents and great-grandparents used to call home. Nothing physical remains of those places. Farmers had long since knocked over the houses. The place where my grandparents used to live is a trio of granaries. My great-grandparents' former residence is a cluster of trees. But she said to me, "There…along there…that's where they lived…your

grandpa and great-grandpa," and launched into more stories about visiting, helping each other out, and walking the roads between their houses and hers. As I squinted my eyes to picture Grandfather Gaspard's cabin with the mudded walls and firewood stacked neatly outside, like I had seen in photographs, and Great-grandfather Charlie's fancy house with the big veranda and numerous lightning rods surrounding it, a shiver went down my spine. No longer was I uncertain of my origins, relegated to vague descriptions of "they lived somewhere along the Grayson road." I had seen the place. I had stood nearby, feet planted, where they had built their houses, held dances, had raised their children, celebrated, grieved, and had dreamt of the future. I was now a part of this place too. And we were all connected.

æn nistwayr: "The Racette Reunion and the Tapestry Trail"

Place, kinship, and histories. These three things kept intertwining over and over before my eyes the summer that I lived in the valley and conducted my fieldwork. In June and July 2001, I helped Bob Desjarlais get ready to host the Racette (Family) Reunion out in Lebret. Bob's mother was a Racette. As his contribution to the reunion, he wanted to create a collection of photos and stories, based on his oral recollections of each relative, that he could hang on the walls of the church basement where some of the events would take place. We spent weeks putting the transcribed oral histories and photos together in a package, so the guests could find their ancestor in the church and read a couple of pages of anecdotes and touching stories. And Bob had other plans too. He arranged for vehicles to take the guests out to the valley and to show them all the places where the Racettes had once lived or frequented: the grandparents' house on the top of the hill, brothers Louis and Joe Racette's houses in the valley, and the old Metis church. All of those meaningful places that he shared with me while doing our "history," the new kin would have these places as their own too. He said that the people needed to go out there; they needed to see the places where their ancestors had lived.

That same summer, the Tapestry Trail brought these elements together too. Situated in the coulee near the Metis farm, this old Red River cart trail had been redeveloped by the Metis youth of the area over the past two summers into a walking trail, complete with stairs and benches made of wood from the 1930 corrals at the farm. As a summer work experience program, it was fairly labor intensive. All of the work was done by hand, and I recall seeing some of the students coming in and out of the office, talking about the hard days in the sweltering heat. But the result was worth it. By the end of the summer, the students, many of whom are descendants of the people who used the original cart trail, had succeeded in making an abandoned and overgrown old road into a contemporary walking path connecting the farm and the valley. As Program Coordinator Pat Fayant wrote in an article for *New Breed Magazine*, besides

gaining job skills and self-esteem from their work, the students "learned what it must have been like when our ancestors forged the original trail hundreds of years ago" (P. Fayant 2001b:5). She said that she hoped the trail could be upgraded and maintained every year so that "people on the trail could really feel like they are part of the history" (P. Fayant 2001a:4).

The First of All Things:

Metis elders' stories and the Qu'Appelle Valley

In the previous section of this thesis, I presented a range of theory that explored a selection of place concepts and terminology as a means of understanding of the role of place in Metis histories and communities. This section will employ many of these theoretical points as a basis to analyze excerpts from interviews with Metis elders and community members conducted during my fieldwork in Fort Qu'Appelle. Based on the theory and ethnographic examples of place, histories, and communities, it is my contention that histories of the Metis in the valley are place-supported, that is, the personal and social memories of past events as expressed by community members are interconnected with the surroundings of the valley (Basso 1996:31; Casey 1987:186-187; Cruikshank 1990:346-356; Cruikshank 1998:17; Kahn 1996:168; Nuttall 1992:54; Stewart 1996:145,148). In addition, places provide a structure for the memories associated with them (Casey 1987:182-187; Cruikshank 1990:347; Cruikshank 1998:17; Toren 1995:163), and they are a means of framing and shaping the related narratives (Basso 1996; Cruikshank 1990:3). On many occasions, the framework of the narrative emphasizes the primacy of place over time in the remembrance of events (Casey 1987:214-215; Cruikshank 1990:347; Cruikshank 1998:17; Little Bear 1998:18; Morphy 1995:188). Places and their narratives also contribute to an understanding of shared community histories, denote certain areas as Metis places, and they help to create a sense of community identity and belonging (Basso 1996:35; Cruikshank 1998:20; Kahn 1996:167-168; Nuttall 1992:57-58; Stewart 1996:137,148). Places and their connected stories also generate insight into Metis values and cultural traditions (Basso 1996:62-63; Cruikshank 1990:346-356; Kahn 1996:173-179), and they illustrate how kinship helps to create a sense of place and community (Blu 1996:216; Kahn 1996:173-179; Stewart 1996:137; Cruikshank 1990:346-356). However, before beginning an analysis

of valley place narratives, it would be prudent to examine some aspects of the use of narrative to understand place.

The use of narrative to facilitate understandings of a community's sense of place or experiences in place, along with the correlated histories and sense of identity, has been an area of contention. J.E. Malpas sees narrative as providing a structure to places, that is, "narrative is that which can be seen as structuring, in a similar fashion, both memory and self-identity, as well as the places...in which self-identity is itself worked out and established" (Malpas 1999:185). He claims, "We understand a place and a landscape through the historical and personal narratives that are marked out within it and that give the place a particular unity and establish a particular set or possibilities within it" (Malpas 1999:186). To clarify, Malpas believes that if place is understood as encompassing the embodied self, then it must be "determined" in ways that are related to the possibilities for action that are available to "agents in their surroundings" (Malpas 2001:236). Therefore, "understanding place in this way must mean giving a central role to narrative, for it is only through some form of narrative structure...that the action-oriented dynamics of place can be articulated" (Malpas 2001:236). He adds that the unity that belongs to places and human lives seems best expressed through the unity of narrative: "a complex and dynamic unity in which different elements are preserved in an ongoing and developing interrelation" (Malpas 2001:236). However, Casey disagrees with Malpas' emphasis on narrative. Casey contends that narratives do not provide structures to place (or persons) but are ingredients of them: "immanent parts of their identity but not delineators of that identity itself" (Casey 2001c:230). Furthermore, Casey objects to elevating the status of narrative on two grounds: narrative tends to favor the temporal dimension of human experience and "narrativity of place" reinforces the view that place is ultimately structural (Casey 2001c:230).

Rodman also advises wariness in the use of narratives to comprehend places and being-in-place. She notes that Entrikin and Tuan, both geographers, advocate the use of narrative to gain a better sense of the experience of place

from different points of view and to examine "the varying ways by which different societies use speech [and] the written word to realize places" (Tuan 1991:695; Entrikin 1991:134; Rodman 1993:207). Yet, Rodman reminds us that places come into being through praxis, not just through narratives, and one should be "wary of the assumption that the geographers' and the inhabitants' discourses will be consistent and that all inhabitants (and all geographers) will share similar views" (Rodman 1993:207).

As a complement to these advisory points, we need to consider some observations made by Basso and Cruikshank. Basso believes that there is a great deal to be learned about a people by the way they speak about the places around them. He writes, "For whenever the members of a community speak about their landscape--whenever they name it, or classify it, or tell stories about it--they unthinkingly represent it in ways that are compatible with shared understandings of how, in the fullest sense, they know themselves to occupy it" (Basso 1996:74). Thus, Basso contends, in brief or lengthy conversational encounters, individuals exchange accounts and observations of the landscape that presuppose mutually-held ideas of what it actually is, why its constituent places are important, and how it may intrude on the affairs of its inhabitants. Through these means, bits and pieces of a common worldview are given situated relevance and made accessible (Basso 1996:74). In a similar way, Cruikshank reminds us to look beyond the textual analysis of narrative to see the broader message associated with the story. If we conceptualize narrative as a negotiated and collaborative process whereby the participants work together not only to create coherence in the narrative but also to express some wider truths about the worlds that lie outside of the stories (Cruikshank 1990:1-4; Linde 1993:12-19; Sarris 1993:17-34), place narratives that seem relatively straightforward textually may have other meanings associated with them. As Cruikshank notes, "Oral traditions...acquire meaning in the situations in which they are used, in interactions between narrators and listeners. Meanings shift depending on how fully cultural understandings are shared by teller and listener" (Cruikshank 1998:40). Indeed, we need to understand how oral

narrative is part of a communicative process. We have to learn what a story *says* and then we have to learn what a story can *do* when used as a strategy of communication (Cruikshank 1998:41). Unless we pay attention to why a specific story is selected and told, "we understand very little of its meanings" (Cruikshank 1998:41). Therefore, the choice of elders and community members to talk about past places in the interviews may indicate that the places are still significant in the present, and as Basso and Cruikshank observe, may also be used to convey messages outside of their use in narrative (Basso 1996:37-41,55-62; Cruikshank 1998:41).

Although relying on narratives as a means of understanding place may not be universally endorsed, there is much to be gained from this approach. Provided that the use of narrative is complemented with accounts of placed-based praxis and that ethnographies make use of multilocality (Rodman 1993:210-213), there is still a role for narratives in comprehending placial phenomena. As Basso and Cruikshank affirm, there is much to learn about a community by the ways they speak about the places around them. Similar to the way Cruikshank believes that life history contributes to explanations of cultural process (Cruikshank 1990:2), so may place narratives contribute to our understanding of how place is meaningful to Metis histories and communities. However, before moving into an analysis of the excerpts from interviews with Metis elders and community members conducted during my fieldwork, I will provide some context for the narratives that follow.

Reflections on the Valley and the Metis

Context is everything, as the saying goes. In order to understand what kind of role place plays in Metis communities and histories in the valley, perhaps it is worthwhile examining some of the ways Metis experiences in the valley have been portrayed in text, both oral and written. What experiences, traditions, and histories have served to reinforce Metis ties to the valley? In *River in a Dry Land: A Prairie Passage*, Trevor Herriot praises the relationship the Metis have had with the valley, remarking that the Metis, as the "embodiment of the best in the Native and the new," historically lived a life

within "locally established and ecologically affirmed boundaries...[that] has not been seen in the region since" (Herriot 2000:15,36). Whether or not this sentiment is true, the connections between the Metis and the valley are still there, dynamic, yet tangible. So, for the purposes of context, I will present a selection of examples from texts, both oral and written, that underscore some of these Metis experiences in the Qu'Appelle Valley. Just as a preface, these pages are not intended to be "a history" of the Metis in the valley. My purpose here is to provide a suitable amount of context for framing and interpreting the narratives. Likewise, by focusing on the Metis of the valley only, this ascribes a sense of boundaries and isolation to the area when this has never been the case. As place theory demonstrates, places are open, porous, and constantly in flux (Massey 1993,1994; Ward 2003; Gupta and Ferguson 1997). This has always been so with the valley. There has always been a significant amount of movement in and out of the area. Fur trade boats travelled up and down the Qu'Appelle River, and cart brigades stopped on their way west (Morton 1939:432; Payment 1990:209). Events that occurred elsewhere in Rupert's Land, such as the Red River resistance in 1870, had an impact on the Metis of the valley (Cowie 1913:401-406). In the present day, highways crisscross the valley multiple times, and the population of several communities in the area changes seasonally with the arrival of tourists and cottage owners. Finally, the intention to keep this subsection brief may inadvertently create a sense of essentialized experience. As Rodman emphasizes, understandings and experiences of place are multiple (Rodman 1993:208,210-212). While I have found many of the accounts, both oral and written, share a number of similarities and I will use these commonalties as a basis for this section, I will also highlight divergent expressions of experience where relevant. With these points regarding "history," essentialism, and boundaries in mind, the following pages will provide a summary of some Metis experiences in the valley as exemplified in texts.

Trevor Herriot writes that the Qu'Appelle Valley is "a relatively moist corridor of prairie aspiring to be woodland" (Herriot 2000:6). Running west to

east for over 250 miles through southern Saskatchewan, at about a mile wide and 450 feet deep, the valley contains a range of flora and fauna that varies with direction travelled (Herriot 2000:5-6). The western part of the valley is home to varieties of prairie grasses and is less wooded than the eastern portion with its birch, elm, poplar, Manitoba maple, and bur oak (Herriot 2000:6). Herriot describes cycles of drought and flood that could render the hills golden with dry, brittle spear grass or leave them as "green as the Appalachians" (Herriot 2000:5-6). Despite its depiction as a "river in a dry land," the Qu'Appelle River and the valley could be a source of abundance. The Metis who lived in the valley from the early 1900s to the 1950s describe living off the land, with their surroundings providing for most of their basic needs. Cabins were often made of whatever wood was available, with exterior walls mudded using valley soil (LaRose 2001:5; D. Fayant 2001:4-5; Ellice Centennial Book Committee 1983:146). Lumber houses were also an option for a few families (D. Fayant 2001:5). Extensive gardens were planted; almost every Metis family had their own garden and a root cellar located under their cabins (Desjarlais 2001a:29,31; LaRose 2001:6). Elders and community members share stories about hunting deer, ducks and partridges; trapping muskrat and rabbits; fishing for suckers, whitefish or gold-eyes; and gathering duck eggs (Desjarlais 2001b:1-4; D. Fayant 2001:10; LaRose 2001:8,17-18). Meat was preserved through canning in sealers (LaRose 2001:8; Ellice Centennial Book Committee 1983:147). They also picked berries, such as saskatoons, gooseberries, raspberries, chokecherries, and cranberries and either dried them for the winter, canned them or sold them (D. Fayant 2001:12-13; LaRose 2001:6-7,11-12; Ellice Centennial Book Committee 1983:147). Seneca root was harvested on the plains above the valley, often in groups of three or four families, and sold to merchants to supplement the family income (LaRose 2001:16; Desjarlais 2001a:10; Ellice Centennial Book Committee 1983:142,147).

Metis communities in the valley during this time were composed of kinship groups. The communities reflected the "chain migration" pattern Diane Payment describes in Batoche: "Parents, children, brothers and sisters settled

on neighbouring or near-by lots" (Payment 1990:37). Elders and community members recall how large families lived in close proximity to each other, with the community composed of an array of grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins (Desjarlais 2001a:30-31; Desjarlais 2001b:6-8; D. Fayant 2001:5-6). As Bob Desjarlais remarks in one of his interviews, "the ones down in the valley, they were definitely all related" (Desjarlais 2001b:8). Some families had their own land, but many settled on the road allowance lands or built houses on the private lands of farmers for whom they were employed (M. Pelletier n.d:3-4; LaRocque 2001:9,16-17,19; Desjarlais 2001a: 32; D. Fayant 2001:5-6; Ellice Centennial Book Committee 1983:142,146). This arrangement worked well for many families, as farm work and general labor were the main means of employment and providing for families during this time. Both men and women, starting in their teens, worked on surrounding farms as laborers or domestic help (Desjarlais 2001b:16; LaRose 2001:10,12; Ellice Centennial Book Committee 1983:142-147). Others generated additional income for the family through trapping muskrats and beavers, providing pest control for farmers and the municipality, or sewing and making braided rugs (Desjarlais 2001b:5,17; D. Fayant 2001:5,8-9; LaRose 2001:17-18; Ellice Centennial Book Committee 1983:147). Many of the communities also built their own (Catholic) churches and priests would come out to say Mass (D. Fayant 2001:6; Desjarlais 2001a:27; LaRose 2001:4-5). Community members remember the Catholic church playing a key role in family life and community life, as well as contributing to a sense of pride arising from the knowledge that local churches were often built by the parishioners (Desjarlais 2001a:24,27; Desjarlais 2001b:15; D. Fayant 2001:6; LaRose 2001:4-5).

Many of the Metis who lived in the valley during these decades describe the ways they maintained aspects of their ethnicity and their traditions. These ethnicity markers had not changed in many respects since the days of Red River. Many elders in the valley were raised speaking Michif, a "language of their own" that evolved from Cree and French, and which is "a uniquely Metis language" (Bakker 1997:4,52-53; D. Fayant 2001:2-3; Desjarlais 2001b:2-3,14-

15). It is not surprising that when Peter Bakker went looking for Michif speakers for his study on the language, he found some people fluent in Michif living in and around the Qu'Appelle Valley (Bakker 1997:126). Other community members spoke French, while English became a necessity for employment and school. Sadly, Michif is a dying language. Very few of the younger generation living in and around the valley can speak it. This is a cause for concern for some Metis community members who can see that there are fewer speakers and of the small number who remain, "nobody wants to talk Michif anymore" (D. Fayant 2001:23). In addition to language, community members also recall attending and hosting fiddle dances held in homes. They describe how important music and dancing was to the community, including how every family seemed to have their own musicians (Desjarlais 2001b:13-16; D. Fayant 2001:16-17; LaRose 2001:13,15; LaRocque 2001:11). Dances were held almost every Saturday night and with word passed around the community, a packed house was usually the norm (Desjarlais 2001b:7; D. Fayant 2001:16; LaRocque 2001:11). Holidays were also a time for family and celebration, and they included dances. New Year's, rather than Christmas, was the main celebratory holiday, and a great deal of time and effort was put into making holiday foods[42] and cakes to feed the visitors who arrived daily during the week from New Year's to January 7 (D. Fayant 2001:15; Desjarlais 2001b:6-7; Ellice Centennial Book Committee 1983:144,280). Emphasis was also put on going out to visit elders during that time (Desjarlais 2001b:6-7).

Although the Metis often remember their lives in the valley as times of hard work and poverty (Ellice Centennial Book Committee 1983:148,397), many individuals also feel that there was a real sense of community there--a feeling of belonging and caring that has lessened with the dissolution of the physical component of the communities (Zeilig and Zeilig 1987:52,146). From the 1940s

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[42] Interestingly, despite the geographical distance between the various Metis communities along the length of the valley, the people I interviewed all had similar recipes for holiday foods...for New Year's it had to be *boulettes* (meatballs), fresh *beignes* (a fried dough similar to a doughnut), and a homemade fruitcake (D. Fayant 2001:15; Desjarlais 2001b:6; LaRose 2001:13-14; Ellice Centennial Book Committee 1983:280).

onward, people began to leave the valley Metis communities. Some families left to find employment in surrounding towns, while others were relocated by government agencies to Regina (LaRocque 2001:12,19-20; D. Fayant 2001:6). Vibrant, lively communities soon faded away and by the 1960s, they existed only in the memories and hearts of the people who once lived there. Yet, despite the physical loss of the communities, there is still a strong connection to those places. The valley itself is a home and remains meaningful. Elders and community members go back to the communities of St. Joseph, Crooked Lake or Chicago Street in memory and in narrative. Their words speak volumes about these places as part of who they are, as part of their heritage, with as much pride and feeling as when they tell stories about their ancestors provisioning the valley's fur trade posts in the 1790s, wintering in the valley in the 1820s, and arriving from Red River to settle in the coulees after the resistance of 1869-1870.

Metis Elders' Stories and the Qu'Appelle Valley

As was described in the introduction to this section, place plays a central part in the construction of Metis histories and understandings of Metis community and identity. In terms of their role in the creation of histories, places often act as a mnemonic device and provide a means of structuring the narratives that unfold, starting with the place name and continuing on to describe what happened there or what was remarkable about that place (Basso 1996; Cruikshank 1990:3; Morphy 1995:188). Many times, this narrative framework emphasizes the primacy of place over time in the remembering of events (Casey 1987:214-215; Cruikshank 1990:347; Cruikshank 1998:17; Little Bear 1998:18; Morphy 1995:188). Places also seem to provide a structure for the memories associated specifically with that place (Casey 1987:182-187; Cruikshank 1990:347; Cruikshank 1998:17; Toren 1995:163), which is occasionally in evidence in the ordering of the narrative. An example of this is an elder telling a story about people who lived in a certain place according to the houses in which they resided. Places and their associated narratives serve to contribute to wider community histories and understandings of a shared past

(Basso 1996:35; Kahn 1996:167-168; Stewart 1996:145,148; Cruikshank 1990:346-356). They act to map out areas once lived in or frequented by the Metis, creating a sense of community places in the valley: places perceived by the community as Metis places (Nuttall 1992:57-58; Cruikshank 1998:20). Places and their related stories also contribute to a sense of community and belonging: there is a sense of group identity that develops through shared past experiences in place, especially when intertwined with kinship (Blu 1996:216; Kahn 1996:173-179; Stewart 1996:137; Cruikshank 1990:346-356). Places and their connected stories function to generate insight into Metis values, traditions, and culture and provide a sense of Metis identity through the emplaced experiences as revealed in the narratives (Basso 1996:62-63; Kahn 1996:173-179; Cruikshank 1990:346-356). Additionally, the choice of community members to talk about past places in the interviews indicates that the places are still significant in the present, and as Basso and Cruikshank observe, may also be used to convey messages outside of their use in narrative (Basso 1996:37-41,55-62; Cruikshank 1998: 41).

One aspect of places, histories, and a community's sense of identity and belonging is place names. Based on the place theory and ethnographic examples provided in the theory section, place names play an important role in a people's understanding of their past emplaced experiences, their histories, as well as conceptions of their identity as a community. As Basso's experiences with the Western Apache demonstrate, place names act as more than mere mnemonic devices for the constructing and re-presenting of histories: they reinforce community values and social norms and provide a guide to community members demonstrating "what it is that being an Apache should normally and properly entail" (Basso 1996:23-29,52). Nuttall observes that place names in the Kangersuatsiaq area of northwest Greenland contribute to the community's memoryscape, as remembered places create a sense of belonging and define community boundaries (Nuttall 1992:57). Kahn describes how place names and their associated stories in Wamira become shared symbols that create a sense

of common history and identity for the villagers, in addition to expressing messages about social values and obligations (Kahn 1996:168,173-179).

Metis individuals, families, and communities of the valley (and area) in the 1900s to 1950s recall a variety of local place names for the places they called home, whether the places still exist physically or not. Near St. Lazare, Manitoba was the community of China Town (Ellice Centennial Book Committee 1983:146,280,283,396). The Metis settlement at Crescent Lake, north of Crooked Lake, was known as Little Tokyo, and the festival name Tokyo Days lives on as an acknowledgment of the given name of the community (*New Breed Magazine* 2001c:18-22; Gabriel Dumont Institute 2002). Near Lebret was Chicago or Little Chicago. Jackrabbit Street was another road in Lebret where Metis people lived, named so because one of the residents, a trapper, had some rabbit skins hanging on a pole in his yard (LaRocque 2002). Further down the valley were Dog Town and Hill Top. Several coulees also had their own names: names that did not appear on any maps or signs. As the following interview excerpts illustrate, the coulees and former settlements like Hill Top and Dog Town are significant in terms of Metis histories and are vital to a sense of community in a number of ways.

The following excerpt is from an interview with Mr. R. James "Jim" LaRocque in 2001. Community members value Jim LaRocque as someone well versed in local history. He was part of the Lebret community history book committee, and he founded the Lebret Museum. As I described in the Methodology section, I had told Mr. LaRocque that I was interested in a history of the Metis in the area. We had met a couple of times previously to chat, but we decided to set up a formal interview to talk about the "history" of the Metis in the valley. As we began the interview in the Lebret Museum, he immediately started talking about places and place names. So, picking up on this cue, I asked him about the names of some places that he had just mentioned to me:

> Jacqueline Pelletier: I never heard of those other places. All I heard of was Chicago Street and Jackrabbit Street and that was it. But I never heard of Julie's Coulee and those other ones. Were they around Lebret as well?

Jim LaRocque: Well, Julie's Coulee is that coulee right here. Julie's been dead for fifty years already. It used to be what's called Julie's Coulee, eh. She was a Julie Majore and became a Mrs. Holhauser. She's quite a lady. She organized quite good. And she worked for the NDP or CCF at that time. But she was a good worker. She did her...She helped lots of people. Doing this and that. She lived at that time at the first house. She lived there. That's why it was Julie's Coulee, eh. So then there were some more Majores further on. And Desjarlais...

JP: And Blondeaus?

JL: J.B. Blondeau's up there. But there was more Desjarlais than Blondeaus, except but J.B. Blondeau lived up there. But there was Bill Desjarlais, or William. And there's...we used to call him "*totem*" but he's a Fisher, but we don't know his real name.

JP: Ah, the nicknames again.

JL: And there was two Desjarlais families up there. And John Radley used to live up there at one time many years ago. And at the present time, Morin lives up there. But he's by himself. John Poitras lived up there for a good number of years also. When he was...As long as he worked on the railway, he lived up there.

JP: On Chicago Street?

JL: No, up Julie's Coulee.

JP: Oh, they were all living in Julie's Coulee.

JL: Oh yeah. There was a hell of a lot of a congregation there at one time. At one time, that Julie's Coulee...that whole coulee was part of Lebret. But in the '30s, in the time of relief or social aid or whatever you call it, the town...all these people were getting social aid, eh. And they were going to bust the town. So, the town gave it to the East Qu'Appelle, the municipality, and now since then there has been some kind of agreement but they still don't call it Lebret technically.

JP: So, Julie's Coulee. Is that the one on the way to the Metis farm? I heard there was a bunch of Metis people living there.

JL: Well, at one time there was a hell of a lot of them there. *Chapik*. And Martin...Pete Martin and his wife. Well, the old Fred Majore was there for many years

> before that. Of course he had to have been there for sixty or seventy years. And the Majore family there,[43] old Fred's children, grew up there and moved all over the place and there's actually none left around here. I think Julie was the last one to leave. Or she died. She didn't leave. And her husband moved to the Fort. What else is there? Oh Dolphus...Adolphus Pelletier...
>
> JP: Ah, I've heard that name.
>
> JL: Adolphus Pelletier was in there. And his wife. And they were there from when Adam was a little boy. A long, long time. I can't really tell you when, but I'll say in 1930, when I was fairly young, he was there and had been there for years and years then, eh (LaRocque 2001:1-2).

This excerpt supports the importance of place to Metis histories and a sense of community. It illustrates how the name Julie's Coulee functions as a mnemonic device to draw out the place-based historical narrative. It provides a means for structuring the narrative: the narrative begins with the place name and the details about who lived there, what they did, where they worked, and events that occurred are mentioned subsequent to, and in association with, the place name. The focus on place also emphasizes the primacy of place to time as a means of remembering past events. Although the events in the narrative occur in the 1930s (or earlier), it is the place that is mentioned first. The narrative does not accord a priority to time as a means of recalling and re-presenting events. In addition, the coulee seems to provide a structure to the memories associated with that place. All of the memories shared in the narrative were related to the coulee, not any other place, as evidenced by my confusion and my question about Chicago Street. The narrative about Julie's Coulee also delineates the coulee as a Metis place (named for a Metis woman), and contributes to the community's body of historical knowledge (social conditions for the Metis at that time and the receipt of social aid). Lastly, the

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[43] In the Lebret community history book, Donald Majore reflects, "We lived in the first coulee in a one-room shack, but we were proud to call it home, then, now and forever" (Lebret History Book Committee 1989:438).

story about Julie's Coulee reveals insights into Metis values and traditions (the importance of family, kinship settlement patterns, and the use of nicknames[44]).

At that same interview, Jim LaRocque also talked about "Hill Top," a place mentioned by Mike Poitras in his family history contribution to the Fort Qu'Appelle community history book[45] (Fort Qu'Appelle and District History Book Committee 1994:566):

> Jim LaRocque: Of course then there's Hill Top. Hill Top, that's up on the south side of what we used to call the steel bridge. It's not a steel bridge any more. It's a cement bridge over here now. It goes across the river. It used to be people would live on the top of the hill over there. They lived there for years and years until oh I'd say 25 years ago. They started to move away or die, eh. But there was Poitras up there. There was Blondeaus up there. Amyottes up there. Jeannottes up there. And Pagets. That's as far as I know. Unless I think of some of the others. Maybe two or three Blondeaus are...two or three different Blondeaus...and one was old Johnny Blondeau, which they called the last buffalo hunter. He's supposed to have, as I remember now, my father told me this. It was maybe after '82, '83, '84, '85...not '85...before that. They never saw buffalo on this side of the river. You see...and the railway went through in '82 and apparently it was just like a fence. The buffalo came to it and wouldn't go over it. So, old Johnny...somebody told him there was one buffalo on this side of the railway by itself. So he went up there and hunted around and finally got it. But nobody knows where he got it--on this side of the river or on the other side. But he finally got it and brought it home. And that was supposed to be, like my dad used to always say he was the last buffalo hunter around here anyways. There was no more buffalo after that (LaRocque 2001:3-4).

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[44] Nicknames are a distinctive part of Metis culture. For more information on Metis nicknames, see Diane Payment's *The Free People-Otipemisiwak: Batoche, Saskatchewan 1870-1930* (Payment 1990:63-64).

[45] "After he returned to Canada they moved south of Lebret, on the south side of the Valley [sic]...where Mike built his home and the children attended school in Lebret. This community was called 'Hilltop' and at that time there were the following neighbors: J.B. LaRoque, Zachary Blondeau, Rene Paget, Mrs. Frances Robillard, Gasper Jeannotte, Joe Amyotte, Joe Blondeau. Mike made a living by trapping fur bearing animals and doing odd jobs for farmers in the area. Mike also hauled field stones that were used to build the Lebret Church in 1925" (Fort Qu'Appelle and District History Book Committee 1994:566).

Like the first excerpt, this story about Hill Top also emphasizes the importance of place to Metis histories and a sense of community. The narrative begins with the place name and the location of the settlement, along with details about the people who lived there. As with the story about Julie's Coulee, the place name triggers the associated narrative, while the place itself structures the story to follow and once again highlights the importance of place, not time, in the recollection of events. The narrative begins by talking about Hill Top, not "this is what happened in 1930 and 1882." By the act of referring to the name of Hill Top and listing the Métis families who lived there, it asserts that this place was a Metis place and a part of the Metis community. Additionally, through its use in narrative to convey information about the community's past and traditions, it is still significant today. Like the story about Julie's Coulee, the narrative about Hill Top reveals particulars about Metis values and traditions, such as how extended families took up residence close by (different Blondeau families settling together), how many years families continued to live in and around the valley (until they left or died, up until about the 1970s for that particular place), how community histories associated with place are passed down through families (Jim LaRocque heard the buffalo hunting story from his father), and how aspects of Red River Metis cultural heritage died out (the end hunting of buffalo hunting with the arrival of the railway).

One of the most widely known areas was Chicago Street or just Chicago. The name was not found on any street sign in Lebret, but the Metis people who lived in or around Lebret all knew about it. The name has also found its way into the texts of various sources, including family contributions to the local community history and the oral histories of Metis veterans[46] (Lebret History

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[46]Chicago Street appeared in a few family histories of Lebret: "Mike and Harriet Pelletier have resided in the Lebret district their entire lifetimes. In November 1988 they will be married 49 years...Mike was born in Chicago, the suburbs of Lebret...Mike and Harriet were aware of each other, but nothing romantic was yet to take place...The romance blossomed and on a beautiful November 21st day in 1939 a wedding took place. Fr. Beaudin married this couple at the Rectory at 8:00 a.m. Horses with tassels were the mode of transportation. A trip up Main Street of Lebret to the flats of Chicago where the celebrating took place...The happy couple resided with Mike's parents for a short time as they waited for a home of their own. This occurred when Maurice and Mary Rose Blondeau moved to the Metis Farm and their log house became

Book Committee 1989:504-505; Gabriel Dumont Institute 1997:12). After talking about Julie's Coulee and Hill Top, Jim LaRocque moved right into a story about Chicago Street:

> Jim LaRocque: Of course then there's the Chicago Street there. Chicago Street there used to be Blondeaus, about three or four Blondeaus. Parisiens, Brebants, Desjarlais or Mrs. Roberts, some more Parisiens and Pelletiers, and two houses of St. Denis. Old Adrien and Corbett, and then across the road from there was the Pelletiers. And a Dumont fella lived there for a while. And Mrs. Poitras. And Zachary Poitras lived on the road allowance further south than that, damn near in the water. And later years they built up some more houses. Mr. Schneider, he was married to a Parisien woman. And the other one was a Parisien married to a Pelletier. But...
>
> Jacqueline Pelletier: That's a lot of families on that street.
>
> JL: Well, I figure that street from where I used to live out there. Do you know where I used to live out there?
>
> JP: Nope.
>
> JL: In the first house. The first house on Chicago Street now. That was my house. OK. From the first house, going south from there was Isidore Blondeau. Now, at one time I think that was in the '30s, because that's what I can remember, there was thirteen houses from there to the corner. You see, so, and if you counted the ones from across the road, then there was more than that. There was a Poitras, Pelletier, Dumont, and Poitras again. She was Mrs. Poitras then, but she married a Brazeau later. And not exactly on that street but down a little bit, by the lagoon there, west, north and west of the lagoon, there used to be a house there and it was occupied by a Martin. At any rate, they lived there. Parisiens lived there. But they didn't blast out of Chicago Street. They were about a quarter of a mile from Chicago Street, which is just down there...
>
> JP: That was part of the road allowance too was it?
>
> JL: Well, no. This house that...was on a piece of land by itself. It wasn't on the road allowance. And of course

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vacant, Mike and Harriet moved into the log house" (Lebret History Book Committee 1989:504-505).

> those that were on Chicago Street were actually not on the road allowance.
>
> JP: Oh, I thought they were.
>
> JL: No, they were on land. Most of the land was my Dad's. And there was a Mrs. Desjarlais or Mrs. Roberts. Mrs. Roberts had that land when her husband went overseas to war and he got killed over there, eh. Then she had that land and three kids: two boys and a girl. And Alex Desjarlais was courting her eh, and at that time the priest watched things pretty close. And old Desjarlais was sleeping there, eh. So, they...I think it was Father Boyer, hooked up the steam here. Everything was steam at that time, and drove over there, and knocked on the door and walked in. Caught old Alex [there] with Flora. "Get up! And come down to the church. I want to marry you right away." So, that's how they got married (LaRocque 2001:8-9).

He continued on with stories of the various former residents of the street, all structured by memory of where their houses had been located at that time. The tales covered the people who had lived there until the 1940s then moved away and the people who had stayed in and around the village of Lebret after Chicago Street was no more and who lived well into their 90s. Through the stories, the street itself appeared before me as a living and tangible place: house after house of families, sometimes packed thirteen people or more to one small building, working different jobs around the valley, holding dances, doing their best to get by and looking out for each other (LaRocque 2001:8-11). A little later in the interview, I reflected that it sure sounded like a memorable place to live:

> Jim LaRocque: It was. It was a neat community, I always say. That's why it was called Chicago. Little Chicago. Because at that time you could buy a jug of wine for five dollars or four dollars and some cents and go down there to a dance and everybody had a good time.
>
> Jacqueline Pelletier: So, they were having dances down there too?
>
> JL: Oh yeah. Every Saturday night.

JP: Just at someone's house?

JL: Yeah. A place for a square or a round dance, but mostly square. And oh it was very nice. Nothing wrong with it. Sometimes liquor would get the best of them and they'd start to fight and this and that.[47] But outside of that, the dance was good, the music was good and a light lunch supplied. And the cake was in a pan about that long and about that deep. And you get a piece of cake and they had either a button or something like that in the cake and whoever got the button made the next party the next Saturday night. So, I would never have any cake until I knew who was going to make the party the next Saturday night.

JP: Chicago Street sounds like a fun little place to be.

JL: My wife worked at the hospital, eh. And one time this old guy laying there half dead, "Where are you from?" She says, "Lebret." "Lebret?" "Yeah" He'd say, "You know where Chicago is?" "Chicago?" And she'd say, "Yeah. I live on it." "You do!" "Yeah." "Oh," he says, "We used to have some good times on that street." Well, these guys would come from up north or someplace and bring a jug of wine and start, eh...give this guy a drink and give that guy a drink and so it all starts and away they go...

JP: When did it change? When did people start moving out of there?

JL: It was in the '40s. In the '40s, like I told you, the Desjarlais left because they figured that they didn't own it anymore. And some of the others left because one reason or another. And if you were a woman with some kids eh, and you were on social aid or whatever it is, and no man or whatever, they'd pick you up, family and all and put you in Regina. And as I said, that would be a big thing because you had telephone, radios, and TVs, and electric lights, and washing machines and out here they didn't have a damn thing. So, gradually that's the way most of them went (LaRocque 2001:11-12).

Similar to the other place names and their associated stories depicted here, the Chicago Street narratives also highlight the role of place in the

[47] Other interviewees didn't recall a problem with alcohol during dances. Bob Desjarlais said that he did not remember seeing people drunk or passed out at dances (Desjarlais 2001b:17-18).

remembrance of past events, the structuring of historical narratives, and the re-presentation of Metis community histories. Beginning the historical narrative with, "Of course then there's the Chicago Street there," instead of "Back in the 1930s," (it was significant that time was mentioned later on--time was of secondary importance) illustrates that place is primary in the recollection of past events. Likewise, the continual return to Chicago Street throughout the interview excerpt, an interview about "history," supports the contention that place plays a structuring role in the narrative: a narrative about past events from the 1930s and 1940s is organized around the place where the events occurred. It is also telling that some of the reflections in the narrative are organized in the order of the houses on the street, reminiscent of Casey's observation that memory is "place-oriented" or "place-supported," and "a keeper of memories" (Casey 1987:186-187,213). The use of the name Chicago Street and its stories reinforces that this was a Metis place, lived in and experienced by Metis people (as we can see from the surnames) and is part of the way community members remember their past. In addition, the fact that it is used in the present to express information about the past indicates that although the place no longer exists physically, it is still meaningful to community members.

In common with the stories associated with Julie's Coulee and Hill Top, the Chicago Street stories also evoke a sense of community identity, belonging, and shared culture and traditions through the description of the street's families and kin groups and the events that occurred there. Jim LaRocque's Chicago Street stories reveal insights into Metis kin groups (which families settled close by each other and the endogamous marriage patterns), community traditions (Saturday night dances and the method for deciding who holds the dance next week), how place was remembered by others (the man in the hospital smiling about Chicago Street), and even the role of the Catholic church and local priests in the lives of the Metis (the anecdote about Alex Desjarlais and Flora Roberts). The Chicago Street narrative also underscores another familiar theme to all three stories so far: the role and influence of government policies,

changing times and social aid on the community along with the departure and loss of community members.

Near the end of that same interview, I also asked about an area known as "Dog Town,"[48] once located near the east end of Lake Katepwa by the spillway. I had heard the name mentioned by other Metis community members, and I wondered if there were any stories associated with it:

> Jacqueline Pelletier: I was going to ask about Dog Town, because we were talking about Chicago and Jackrabbit Street...
>
> Jim LaRocque: Well, Dog Town was all Skinner's land eh.
>
> JP: Was it?
>
> JL: Oh yeah. Just from the dam up there and east, eh. It belonged to Skinner and at one time...it was just prairie and side hill then, eh. And that's where everybody just went and built. They never asked Skinner or nothing, they just built there. And then Skinner would say, "Oh they build here." "I don't know why but it's my land." "Oh, you own this land?" "So you come and give me a hand," he says, "Someday." He says, "Some of them then went to work with me, eh." And some lived there for...well, the younger ones only lived a few years when they moved away, but the older ones stayed there for a few years.[49] It was down by the dam and they could go and get fish. At the dam and stuff like that. But Dog Town was of ill repute. Well, there was Brebants, Pelletiers...
>
> JP: Any Poitras down there?

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[48] Bob Desjarlais also mentions Dog Town in one of his interviews, and he pointed it out when we were driving around the places where the Metis used to live in the valley (Desjarlais 2001a:7). In the interview text, he recalls Napoleon Brebant, Jack Pelletier, and Fred Parisien used to live there (Desjarlais 2001a:6-8).

[49] Both Bob Desjarlais and Jim LaRocque shared some interesting stories about Ernie Skinner, a white farmer from the area. Jim recalls that Skinner hired Metis only to work his farm and would let them build houses on his land and live there. He also paid for his workers to go to the doctor, he bought the men their work clothes, he would buy groceries for his workers' families if they needed it, and he instituted a pension system for the men who worked for him for years. According to Jim LaRocque, he paid $20 a month to the men who had worked for him for 20 years (LaRocque 2001:15-16). He also left a quarter section of land to the Metis people after he died so that they would have a place to live (LaRocque 2001:17). There is some difference of opinion as to what happened to the land and why the local Metis never received it: some say that the will was contested by Skinner's family and others say that the Saskatchewan government took the land (Desjarlais 2001a:19-20; LaRocque 2001:17).

JL: I don't remember any Poitras, no.

JP: Yeah, I remember the Brebants and the Pelletiers. I heard that Leo and Mike were down that way.

JL: At any rate, in the '30s one time, they killed a man down there.

JP: Oh. I didn't hear about that.

JL: They killed Dan McKinnon...and Dan McKinnon had a Henry Pelletier daughter that he didn't live with, but he must have paid enough visits there because he had about five kids with her when he got killed, eh. And it's not like now that you prove that you live with them, you did something. At that time, she didn't get a damn thing, and five kids. But she got pretty good up to then because he got a pension of about $200 or $300 a month from the war and they'd feed her and the kids and everything else. Fine and dandy. But a Parisien got blamed for that, but I don't think that it was Parisien that killed him. He was at a dance that night and he was after this girl, eh. And old Dan said, "You leave that girl alone. That's my girl." And Richard's supposed to have said, "Well, why don't you marry her if it's your girl." And they got into an argument, back and forth. And everybody stopped kinda squabbling and that was it. But the next morning, Dan was dead. So, Richard got blamed for killing him. So, OK. But if you read...in the trial...[it] came out, he was killed with a seneca root digger. I don't know if you know what a seneca root digger is.

JP: Yes.

JL: A long thing with a handle on it like...So, a seneca root digger was used to kill him. So. And everybody down there said that the seneca root digger came from a Mrs. Brebant. So, I don't know. At any rate, Richard got five years for that. That was all Richard got. But Dog Town from then on kinda disappeared (LaRocque 2001:19-20).

In common with the other excerpts presented here, the Dog Town narrative also supports the centrality of place to Metis histories and a sense of community. The unfolding story begins with my question about the place name. Picking up on this cue, Jim LaRocque launches into an account of who owned the land, where it was located, the families who lived there, and a memorable

event that occurred at that place. As with the other place narratives, the place name triggers the connected stories, while the place itself structures the details of what follows. Once more, time is not the main referent in the recollection of events. Jim LaRocque's memories of Dog Town begin with a description of the location of the settlement, not with "in 1930, this is what happened in Dog Town." The use of the name Dog Town and the recounting of the Metis families who lived there asserts that this place was a Metis place and therefore a part of the Metis community, of "ill repute" or not. Additionally, the use of this place in narrative to convey information about the community's past and traditions indicates that Dog Town is still meaningful today. Similar to the other stories, Jim LaRocque's Dog Town narrative reveals some interesting aspects about Metis values and traditions. This excerpt provides information about the types of work Metis community members did during the 1930s and the possible relationship they had with their employer (Skinner allowing the families to keep living there as long as they come to work for him). It also gives probable reasons for why people chose to live where they did (besides being allowed to squat, they had access to resources such as fish). The narrative refers to violence in the community (the murder of Dan McKinnon and the use of a seneca root digger--a tool used by the Metis to harvest seneca root to earn money--as the murder weapon). Finally, once again, as a common theme, the narrative contains a reference to the disappearance of the settlement and the loss of community members.

The importance of place to Metis histories and a sense of community is intensified when one is actually in the places that hold so much meaning. Early in my fieldwork, George Fayant, nephew to Bob Desjarlais, arranged for the three of us to drive out into the valley to see the places that Bob wanted to show to me. Bob Desjarlais was someone who was also valued by the community for his knowledge and stories about the valley. An individual who seemed to know and be on good terms with everyone in the Fort Qu'Appelle and Lebret area, he grew up in the valley in the 1930s and 1940s. So, that spring day, I packed a tape recorder and a notepad, and we headed out. After

driving to the house on top of a hill where Bob's grandparents had once lived, the house still standing on private lands, we drove down into the valley and Bob pointed to a trail on the hillside and explained its significance to me and to his nephew, George:

> Bob Desjarlais: This is where my uncle used to come down with the horse and buggy. He used to come down this hill here.
>
> George Fayant: Really?
>
> BD: Yeah. That's an old, old trail. Yeah, my uncle used to come down that trail there with the horse and buggy and come to church in the valley here when they....See they used to live just on top of the hill there, right. Uncle Henry.
>
> GF: Boy, I wonder if we could find remnants of that in there.
>
> Jacqueline Pelletier: Maybe, yeah.
>
> BD: So, anyway, that was Uncle's trail. My uncle used to use that all the time when they used to come down to come to church, eh. That was their way to church. And everybody went to church on Sunday, eh. There wasn't a person that didn't go to church on Sunday.
>
> GF: It was more than just a religious...
>
> BD: They all gathered there and they all ate together.
>
> GF: Kinda like a community reunion.
>
> BD: But this is how they kinda stayed together eh, due to the fact that they were...Uncle was living here. Uncle Joe was living up on top of the hill over there. And then the others guys lived down in the valley and these people living down here, you know. So it was nice to get together on the weekend, eh. Go to church and then after Mass, we used to have a picnic there. There used to be a little bush there by the church. And then we used to go in the bush there. And we had a place there. We set all the blankets and stuff there. And sit around there and everybody put their food out there. And just help yourself and eat. And we all ate together. Like because they were all relatives, eh (Desjarlais 2001a:24).

This narrative about the trail on the hillside that was used by Bob Desjarlais' uncle demonstrates how necessary place is to Metis histories and a sense of community. This account differs slightly from the place narratives of Jim LaRocque, which were told during an interview away from the places to which they referred. Bob Desjarlais' story about Uncle Joe Racette's trail was shared with George and I while we sat nearby and looked upon the winding path that led into the valley. Yet, despite this difference from the preceding stories, it has much in common with them in the way that it emphasizes the importance of place to histories, individuals, and the community. Being in that place, listening to Bob's memories of his uncle, also generated a sense of immediacy, a sense of a living connection to the place, peoples, and the past that the interview narratives, although they had this aspect, did not possess to the same degree. Looking at the trail on the hillside, being in that place brings to mind for Bob the stories and experiences associated with it. The place also frames the narrative. The stories that were told are connected to the trail and the words "trail" and "hill" are mentioned numerous times. Bob Desjarlais' declaration that this "was Uncle's trail" and his description of where his relatives lived, how they moved through the land, and how they gathered together on Sundays all serve to map out this place as a Metis place and part of the Metis community. The trail and its stories about the relatives who used it and who lived nearby also adds to the communal histories of the community and the sense of a shared past. The link with kinship is likewise significant. The narrative connects Bob and George to the trail and hill in a meaningful way. Their ancestors lived on the top of the hill and used the trail: this contributes to their sense of identity and belonging. Finally, the stories reveal facets of Metis values and traditions: the tendency of families to live close by one another (Bob Desjarlais' uncles live near each other), the importance of church for community life (Mass was always attended and the gathering afterwards was anticipated by community members), and the importance of family (and the priority of maintaining close ties). As with the other narratives, the remembrance and

sharing of this story with George and I indicates that the place remained significant and meaningful for Bob.

Later on during that same drive around Bob's familiar places in the valley, we stopped beside the small Metis church located on the old Fort Ellis Trail, now located on private lands and fenced off behind barbed-wire. Made out of brick, the church was still standing, but it had seen better days. Although it was marked by graffiti and vandalized inside, when I glanced over to see Bob Desjarlais looking at it and smiling, I knew that he was seeing something else in this place that George and I could not:

> Bob Desjarlais: And this is our old church. This is where we used to go to church. Right beside those trees there, there's a two-story house there. Yeah. There was a great big two-story house, like something like the one that was up there where Grandpa stayed. Yeah. And this church here, this is where we all went to church. There was a bush along there. There was a bush there on that side and that's where we used to have our picnics. And this is where, this old church, every Christmas my aunt and my grandmother used to sing a Cree hymn, which is only sang at Christmas Mass, Midnight Mass. Yeah. Just like, you know, looking at this building, I could see them and I could hear them, right now.[50]
>
> George Fayant: When did they quit using this as a church, do you recall?
>
> BD: Oh, probably back in the '70s.
>
> GF: 'Cause I was going to say, it wasn't a very long ago because I believe my brother Stan was still baptized in this church.
>
> BD: He could have been. Oh, no. No. No. George. No, he wouldn't be, no. Your dad was.
>
> GF: Oh, maybe it was Dad then.

---

[50] One of the more interesting aspects of this interconnection between places and people is this capacity of persons who have passed away or moved away to remain forever present and remembered in the landscape. Miriam Kahn touches upon this in her ethnography: even after she had left Wamira, she was still a part of the community because of her emplaced experiences that had left her social presence in and around the village (Kahn 1996:190-193). This is relevant to the Metis social imaginary and constructions of community, reinforcing the view that Metis conceptualizations of place rely heavily upon kinship and social relations (Blu 1996), and this topic will be explored in a future study.

> BD: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Your dad definitely was baptized there. And I was too.
>
> GF: And what kind...what was it made out of?
>
> BD: That's a kind of like a stone, eh.
>
> GF: It looks like cement almost.
>
> BD: Yeah. Yeah. I think that was some of the stuff that they made over at...
>
> GF: ...the brick factory there?
>
> BD: Yeah. And then they made a church so that they have their own church.
>
> Jacqueline Pelletier: Yeah. Who built it, just the people from around here?
>
> BD: The Metis yeah, the Metis around in here. That was their church (Desjarlais 2001a:26-27).

The centrality of place to histories and a sense of community is also supported by Bob Desjarlais' Metis church story. Similar to the account about Uncle Joe Racette's trail, this one was also conveyed to George and I while we parked the car nearby and looked upon on the old church sitting behind the fence. Hearing the story in view of the church gave us that same sense of immediacy, a sense of a living connection to the church, the relatives, and the past. It reminded me of Basso's reflection upon hearing an Apache story in place that it was like he was there, watching the ancestors (Basso 1996:13). Even Bob Desjarlais experienced this sense of re-emplacement and of collapsed time when he states in the text, "looking at this building, I could see them and I could hear them, right now" (Desjarlais 2001a:26-27). This church not only evokes the stories associated with it but also creates a framework for the memories, as the church opens and concludes the narrative. Bob Desjarlais' statement, "this is our old church," his description of how it was built by the Metis community, and his memories of how his relatives prayed there and gathered there reinforce the feeling of this locale as a Metis place. The old

Metis church and the reflections about the parishioners contribute to communal understandings of the past. Kinship plays a role here again as well. Kinship connects Bob Desjarlais and George Fayant to the church, the place around it, and the past events that occurred there. Bob Desjarlais' grandmother and aunts sang in this church; his relatives gathered outside to picnic: this contributes to a sense of place-based identity and belonging. Lastly, the church narrative provides insight into Metis values and traditions. Like the story about Uncle Joe Racette's trail, the narrative accentuates the importance of church for community life (the function it had in holidays and the welcoming of new community members through baptism and the role it played in maintaining close kinship ties) and the community coming together to achieve a common goal (building their own church, a Metis church). Like the other narratives, the sharing of the church stories with George and I suggests that this place still had meaning for Bob Desjarlais. Both places, Uncle Joe's Trail and the old Metis church, were areas where Bob specifically asked George to stop while we were driving around the valley.

Another narrative about the church illustrates some of the ways that places can trigger a range of memories associated with them. Dorothy Fayant is Bob Desjarlais' younger sister. Fluent in Michif, the mother of ten children, active in the Metis local and always present at Metis cultural events and workshops,[51] she also grew up in the valley and has fond memories of the time she lived there. In an interview in the fall of 2001, I asked her about the Metis church:

> Jacqueline Pelletier: And did you guys go to that church down there as well, the little church?
>
> Dorothy Fayant: Yeah. We went to church in that little church every Sunday. And I don't know how we ever...all the people used to get in there.
>
> JP: Yeah, I know 'cause when I drive by and I look at the size of it and I keep thinking, from what I hear of the community down there, how did everybody fit?

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[51] Dorothy has helped out during the Lebret Metis Cultural Days many times and has given bannock baking demonstrations in Michif to schoolkids (D. Fayant 2001:21-22).

DF: Most of the people stood outside by the door, I'm sure. We went to church there all the time when we were living down there then we moved to Sintaluta. That's where my sister Margaret and I made our first communion, in Sintaluta. And then when I got married and Stan was born on the 24th of September '61, that church...they were still going to church down there. So I took...that's where Stan got baptized. Yeah. Yeah. 'Cause I took my baby down there and got him baptized in the little church down in the valley. Then I think that was pretty well the last time we went to church there too. Shortly after that they closed it down. It was probably when that Freddie Brown bought the place and they closed the church down. And there was no more church down there.

JP: So, who was the priest that would come out to that one?

DF: It was Father Guy. That's all I remember. Father Guy. He was a rough and gruff old priest. He used to come in his little Model T or whatever it was and all the people would be gathering but it would be the boys, the young boys that were out the night before and they were still...had hangovers and stuff and were playing ball or something. And he'd take...and it was an old truck he had...he'd take his truck and go down there and all the boys would be in the back of the truck. He'd bring them back to church [laughter]. He wouldn't let them miss Mass.

JP: "Get in there!" I guess that's why he had a truck. He could load everybody up.

DF: Yeah. And every Sunday, I remember in the summertime, every Sunday, one Metis family would have the priest over for dinner. 'Cause we'd have Mass, it must have been about 10:30 Mass or something like that. And then the priest would go to one of the Metis houses for dinner 'cause I remember I used to just love it when the priest was coming to our place for dinner because I knew we were going to have a beautiful meal. Everything was going to be the best in the house. Yeah. Because the priest was coming to eat with us (D. Fayant 2001:6).

This narrative about the old Metis church is a pleasant complement to Bob Desjarlais' account. Similar to the other narratives presented here, the

church acts as a mnemonic device to evoke memories of past events that transpired there. Indeed, the primacy of place in terms of memory and histories is hinted at, with the emphasis on the church and not just a chronicle of what happened there according to calendar years. There is a mention of 1961, but this is associated with a birthdate and not an event occurring at the church. Interestingly, the baptism that did take place there is not referenced in tandem with a calendar date. Dorothy Fayant's narrative of the Metis church contributes to the community's understandings of a shared past. It also highlights the diversity in remembrance and re-presentation of community histories and the need for multivocality and multilocality as expressed by Rodman (Rodman 1993:207-218). Dorothy's memories and her brother Bob's recollections differed regarding Stan's baptism in the church. This may support the fact that places are meaningful to community members in varying ways and that their memories reflect this. For Dorothy, the church is significant as the place where her son was baptized. For Bob, the church is where he saw his aunt and grandmother singing Cree hymns and where the families had their picnics. The association of the church with family is notable. In common with the other place narratives, it underscores the interconnection between kinship and place and a sense of community. Additionally, Dorothy Fayant's church stories also highlight the importance of the church in community life and the part of the priest in the local community (gathering the boys up for Mass and having dinner with the parishioners every Sunday in the summer).

Before I finished my fieldwork in Fort Qu'Appelle that summer, I met up with Bob Desjarlais once again to ask him about some of the places we had seen during the trip out to the valley in May. We were sitting in the Eastern Region III office, looking at some topographic maps I had bought, and I noticed Blackwood and Pheasant Coulee on the maps. Blackwood was meaningful to me, as I had seen the name written on an ancestor's scrip application. During that spring trip out to where the Metis used to live, we had driven by Blackwood, a small wooded area resembling a miniature forest in Pheasant Coulee. So, to

begin the interview, I asked Bob what he could tell me about Blackwood and Pheasant Coulee:

> Bob Desjarlais: Every winter we used to hunt in that great big Pheasant Coulee there. We used to hunt deer there, years ago. With my uncles and my dad, matter of fact I used to come all the way down...We used to go hunting when the wind was from the right direction, eh. We had to make sure the wind was blowing from the southeast and I used to chase the deer to my dad and my two uncles. There was Uncle Reny, Dad's first cousin, and Uncle Harry Poitras was another cousin of my dad's...Yeah, Reny Amyotte. Yeah. And there were the hunters down there. There were the three guys that supplied the meat. And ducks in the fall. And fish in the spring for the people down in the valley, eh...So these people down there they all depended on my dad and my two uncles 'cause they loved hunting, eh. And then these people years ago, what they used to do, the non-hunters, was they used to buy shells for my dad and my uncles, eh. They used to give them some shells to go hunting. And Dad and them, well they'd kill something. And I remember so well like once we'd get a kill, once we'd kill one or two, and Uncle Reny was a great one to figure out what we needed, eh. About how much we need. And we'd kill a couple smaller ones and so what he'd say, you know, "No, that's not enough *mon cousin*," he used tell my dad, you know. That means "my cousin," eh. And he said, "We gotta get one or two more, you know. We haven't got enough here for everybody, you know." So I'd go back and I'd chase some more to them and they'd kill two or three more. And my uncles, they'd have a chance to kill maybe a dozen of them eh, but they only killed what we needed. "Yeah, yeah, that's enough," they said, you know. And the rest could stand right in front of us, they wouldn't shoot them...So, they knew how to harvest game very, very well. And I had so many people, you know, saying, you know, that, "Oh the Metis people slaughtered animals." I worked with my ancestors for years and I never, never once saw the time that they ever slaughtered. And they never, never did...they never sold an ounce of meat. The meat they got was pretty well all figured out by my two uncles and my dad. Where this meat was gonna go...They knew exactly how much they need. They knew where it was going. Yeah, we would skin that deer and then we'd start cutting it up and my uncle Reny was really good he'd say, "Well, this guy's got this many kids, he and his wife and himself, you know, they need a piece this big." So they cut this up, and then wrap it up, and put his name on it, eh. And then at night, well, they'd hook

> onto the sleigh, and they'd throw all this meat in the sleigh box and away they go. Go out delivering meat. See, at 10 o'clock at night. Well, you know there was game wardens around at that time, you know, those years. They had to watch for those (Desjarlais 2001b:1-2).

The Pheasant Coulee narrative also exemplifies the interrelation between place, Metis histories, and community. The name, Pheasant Coulee, leads into an account of what happened in this place and who was there. Again, the primacy of place over time is in effect as the story is structured around the coulee and the only reference to time is "those years." Comparable with the other narratives, this one maps out Pheasant Coulee as a Metis place: somewhere Metis community members frequented to hunt deer and to provide for families in the area. The memories of hunting in Pheasant Coulee, avoiding the game wardens, and delivering the meat to families also add to the community's knowledge of their shared past. The kinship ties mentioned reinforce the sense of belonging and identity for community members: the Desjarlais, Poitras, and Amyotte families (among others) were all connected to these hunting grounds, and they are still connected through the significance of the place to the community. As with the other narratives, the Pheasant Coulee story underscores community values such as sharing and reciprocity (sharing meat with the other families, receiving shells to go hunting), importance of family and kin networks (hunting together and providing for each other), and it emphasizes conservation and a careful use of resources (only hunting what was needed).

During that same interview, I asked Bob Desjarlais about New Year's festivities held down in the valley. On a number of previous occasions, he had talked about what the holidays were like when he lived in the valley years ago, and so he described his experiences of going from house to house visiting. The places he mentioned in the narrative were the same ones he had made a point of showing to me during our trip down the to valley back in the spring:

> Bob Desjarlais: Oh yes. Yeah. Yeah. Going back to New Year's down in the valley. Everybody respected the

elders, eh. They all respected the elders. And then we always used to go to Grandpa Charlie Racette's and old Grandma's there. And we used to go there at 4 o'clock in the morning. Can you imagine somebody coming to your place for breakfast at 4 o'clock in the morning? You know, it's just unreal, when you think of it. And then from there, well, we'd go to old Grandpa Norbert Racette, eh. And old Granny Flora's place. And we'd go there. And you had to eat in every place. And the thing was, that day it was always *boulettes* and *beignes*, eh. And bannock, eh. But the real thing was the *beignes* and the *boulettes*. So, in the fall, like when it came close to winter or close to Christmas like that, New Year's, well that's when Dad and my uncles used to go out and kill something. Then well, these peoples would grind that deer meat up, eh. And make *boulettes* out of it eh, you know. Yes, there was a lot of that. And then they'd have a dance New Year's night. They'd have a dance someplace. Like a lot of times they had it at Grandpa Joe Cardinal's place, eh. They used to dance there. And then they used to go and dance New Year's night too sometimes at Uncle Harry Poitras' because they were living in a great big house, eh. So, they had lots of room. So, everybody used to go and gather there New Year's night. And then the next day, well, you go and visit somebody else, eh, you know. Like after when we used to finish at Grandpa Norbert's, then we used to go up to my uncles to go and see my grandma, eh. Dad's mother. We'd go and see her. And then after when we were finished there, well, we'd go and see Uncle Toby while we were there. And then Grandma used to stay with my Aunt Clara and Uncle Joe, eh, out on the farm there. So, anyway after when that's done, well, we always came back. Well, Uncle Joe and them they always used to come down. They'd stop off and have supper with us at home. And then wherever the party was, everybody went down there, eh. They all gathered there. All of them. And they'd go and dance. And the next day, well we'd go down to Uncle Harry's for a while. Go and visit there for a while. Go and have a little lunch with them. Then we'd go over to Uncle Sam's and Grandpa Joe Cardinal's, go there too. And it kinda...the whole week, what they call All Saint's Week eh, that...right from the 1st of January 'til the 6th of January. And they called that, the 6th of January, *la toussaint*, they called it. Yeah, that's a Cree word. And this is when my uncle Sam was born. And that's why he was called Toussaint (Desjarlais 2001b:6-7).

This narrative is slightly different than some of the others in that the place of significance is the valley in general and it has an event connected to it: New Year's. Yet, aside from this slight variation, it does have many of the same qualities of the previous stories and also provides an excellent example of how place can be defined through human relations (Blu 1996:216). Thus, in many respects, the meaningful place here is mapped out through journeying to the home of each relative. Beginning the recollection with "down in the valley," it soon progresses to an account detailing whose house was visited first, then second, then third. Hearing this narrative, one can almost envision the valley being mapped out as their place, a Metis place, because of the travelling to and from the relatives' houses. This story about New Year's in the valley seems to support Massey's observation that the spatial is constructed of social relations (Massey 1994:2) and Blu's contention that a sense of community and place arises from social relationships and kinship networks (Blu 1996:216). Similar to the other narratives, it is structured around place (the valley and each home), it adds to community knowledge about past events (how New Year's was celebrated in the 1930s and 1940s), and it provides a wealth of information about holiday traditions and social behavior (preparing and serving holiday foods, emphasizing the importance of visiting elders, and marking the holiday with dances).

During that same interview, we got onto the subject of dances held back in the valley when Bob Desjarlais was growing up. I had heard Bob mention before that he used to call square dances as a youngster, so I asked him about his square dance calling days when he lived down in the valley. What emerged was a narrative beginning with swimming holes, moving on to fiddle music and teenagers dancing Sunday afternoons away in their relatives' houses, and in the midst of all this were some telling comments about the centrality of place:

> Bob Desjarlais: So we used to go swimming. We had our few favorite swimming holes all the way down in the valley there, in the river. So we'd go swimming. And after dinner, well, we'd say, "Well, what are we going to do now?" Well, we're going to dance. Let's dance. OK, well. We gotta get our fiddler. So we'd go and get Uncle Edward. Uncle Edward would come. And then we'd go

> and get my cousin Stan Klyne to come with his guitar. And so we'd get them going and then we'd dance, eh. But the kids that were dancing were about 14, 15 years old, eh, 16, 17. And I was only about 12 years old. So I used to stand on top of a chair and I used to do my calling there. So this one time, oh we were having a good time at Uncle Reny's there...But we used to have it at Uncle Reny's because they had a fair-sized kitchen there, you know. And we used to put the table on the side of the chairs, you know, and we cleared the floor like they used to, eh. That's what they did when they'd partied. So we'd do the same thing even. But God, it was...I remember that just like today. And the thing is, Harry had a family reunion here, oh it just must have been about 10, 12 years ago. My uncle Reny was still alive, but my uncle Reny had moved from the valley to Regina and then from Regina, when he got sick, he moved to Hamilton, Ontario. He had two daughters over there and they wanted him over there. So they came and got him and he was living in Hamilton, Ontario. So, he came down here for this reunion. And we had it at their place there, where we went and pulled that picture. Well, anyway, when we had that reunion, Uncle was laughing there and laughing and a matter of fact, he was kinda half-crying. He remembered, you know, so well. And he was so happy. He said, "*Mon neveu*, " he said, my nephew, "remember the time," he said, "when you used to call square dances in the old house here?" I said, "Yeah. I remember, Uncle. Can you remember that?" And this, we were talking about 45 years back, eh and he remembered. He said, "I remember that time when we came," he said, "God," he said, "you should have seen," he was telling the guys there, eh, there were a bunch of guys there, and my cousins were there too, eh. They were laughing. He said, "Oh I remember when Bob used to call square dances." But none of those other guys even tried or attempted to do anything like that eh. It always had to be me, you know. I was the ringleader...[laughter] (Desjarlais 2001b:14-15).

This narrative makes use of the valley as a whole, with reference to a couple of specific places in particular--the swimming holes in the river and Uncle Reny's house--to describe Bob's experiences as a square dance caller when he was a child. However, when examining the narrative, his uncle's house is as much, if not more, a focus of the story than the square dance calling. Parallel with the other place-based narratives, a place of significance, in this

instance Uncle Reny's house, acts to evoke the story and to structure the story that unfolds. Bob makes reference throughout the narrative to his uncle's house: the dances took place there because of the kitchen, the family reunion held there, the fact that he and I had gone there back in May, and how his uncle was moved to tears by the memories associated with that house. In the same way as the previous narratives, these recollections of Uncle Reny's house add to the communal body of knowledge about the past for the local community and illustrate how kinship and a sense of place are interconnected--Bob mentions his cousins and uncles throughout the story. Similar to the story about New Year's in the valley, the narrative emphasizes how a sense of community can arise from social relationships and that it is the quality of these relationships that define place (Blu 1996:216). A familiar aspect is also present: insights into traditions and values through the narrative. The importance of family, a love of square dancing, these are there, but so is something else: place. The necessity of place as a means to recall events and traditions is alluded to in this story. Thinking about the times at his uncle's house, Bob Desjarlais observes, "I remember that just like today," and his next sentence is about the family reunion held there. Held, "at their place there, where we went and pulled that picture," referring to George, himself, and I. This is intended, I believe, to draw my attention back to the house and its role in the memories of what occurred there. Additionally, Bob's description of how his uncle "was kinda half-crying" at the house because "he remembered...so well. And he was so happy," saying, "my nephew, remember the time...when you used to call square dances in the old house here," is noteworthy. Back in a place that holds so much meaning, his uncle is overcome with emotion. Bob remembers this, comments on it, and includes it in his narrative about his uncle's old house. This suggests a recognition of place as fundamental to an understanding of our pasts, our experiences, and ourselves.

Conclusion: Metis Elders' Stories and the Qu'Appelle Valley

As cited previously, Basso contends there is much to be learned about a people by the way they speak about their familiar places. Whenever community members speak about their landscape, name it and tell stories about it, they represent it in ways that are attuned with shared understandings of how they know themselves to occupy it. They also provide insights into why its constituent places are important and how it may intrude on the affairs of its inhabitants (Basso 1996:74). Based on the narratives presented here, place is crucial to the construction and representation of Metis histories and is vital to understandings of Metis community and identity. In relation to history-making, places often function as a mnemonic device, and they provide a way of structuring the narratives that unfold, starting with the place name and continuing on with a description (Basso 1996; Cruikshank 1990:3; Morphy 1995:188). Basso observes that for the Western Apache, place names serve to anchor narratives of past events to points upon the land, as knowing the location of where an event happened is of paramount importance (Basso 1996:87). This is similar in many ways to the valley place stories, including Jim LaRocque's accounts of Julie's Coulee, Hill Top, and Chicago Street (LaRocque 2001:1-2,3-4,8-9,11-12), as well as Bob Desjarlais' memories of Pheasant Coulee (Desjarlais 2001b:1-2). These narratives, and the events and insights associated with them, are connected with a specific place and place name. Places also structure the narratives that unfold. Julie Cruikshank observes that landscape provides more than a setting for a narrative: it actually frames and shapes the story (Cruikshank 1990:3). This is also evident in the valley narratives, with the examples of Jim LaRocque's Chicago Street and Dog Town stories. In the Chicago Street narrative, the details of what events occurred and which families resided there are organized around the remembered order of the houses on the street. The Dog Town narrative begins with a comment about who owned the land and ends with the observation that the community disappeared, but in between these points are the details about

who lived there and the murder that took place in the 1930s (LaRocque 2001:8-9,11-12,19-20).

Likewise, many of these narratives emphasize the primacy of place over time in the recollection of events (Casey 1987:214-215; Cruikshank 1990:347; Cruikshank 1998:17; Little Bear 1998:18; Morphy 1995:188). Little Bear notes that place is the most important referent for his people, while Casey affirms that there is no grasping of time without place (Little Bear 1998:18; Casey 1993:21). Morphy also relates how "place has precedence over time in Yolngu ontogeny" (Morphy 1995:188). The elders' and community members' narratives also support this primacy of place over time. Jim LaRocque's stories about Julie's Coulee, Hill Top, Chicago Street, and Dog Town all have a particular time in the past associated with them, in these examples the 1930s, 1940s, and even 1882, but none of the narratives use chronological time as the starting point or main referent (LaRocque 2001:1-2,3-4, 8-9,11-12,19-20). Similarly, Bob Desjarlais' stories are notable for their absence of a referent to specified years. His sister's narrative does contain a reference to a birthdate but her memories of the church are not structured according to calendrical years (Desjarlais 2001a:24,26-27; Desjarlais 2001b:1-2,6-7,14-15; D. Fayant 2001:6).

In tandem with this, places also tend to provide a structure for the memories associated specifically with them (Casey 1987:182-187; Cruikshank 1990:347; Cruikshank 1998:17; Toren 1995:163). Casey observes that memory is naturally place-oriented or place-supported, a "keeper of memories" and cites the use of a place-based memory method by the ancient Greeks as an example of this (Casey 1987:182-183,186-187,213). The valley narratives also exhibit this quality. Jim LaRocque's memories of Chicago Street are seemingly organized by the location of the houses on the street (LaRocque 2001:8-9), as much as his memories of Julie's Coulee arise from the families who used to live there (LaRocque 2001:1-2). Bob Desjarlais' stories about his uncle Joe Racette's trail and his uncle Reny's house also underscore how places provide a framework for memories associated with them. In the narrative about Uncle Joe Racette and his hillside way to the church, Bob Desjarlais refers to the trail

a number of times and the stories are associated with this specific place (Desjarlais 2001a:24). Likewise, the narrative about his uncle Reny's house illustrates how several different memories--the dances, the family reunion, our trip there in May 2001, and his uncle's emotional connection to the house--are all structured by the house itself (Desjarlais 2001b:14-15).

Finally, in terms of histories, places and place narratives also serve to contribute to community histories and the conceptualization of a shared past (Basso 1996:35; Kahn 1996:167-168; Stewart 1996:145,148; Cruikshank 1990:346-356). As Basso, Kahn, Stewart, Cruikshank and others contend, places and their associated names and stories help to create shared social histories that are rich in meaning and aid in the understanding of past events. The narratives told by Jim LaRocque, Bob Desjarlais, Jeanne LaRose, and Dorothy Fayant all play a role in community perceptions of past events and experiences. Jim LaRocque's memories of the dances on Chicago Street and the unfortunate murder at Dog Town are as much a part of the Metis histories of the area as Bob Desjarlais' recollections of his relatives attending Mass every Sunday at their church and his family going hunting in Pheasant Coulee (LaRocque 2001:11-12,19-20; Desjarlais 2001a:26-27; Desjarlais 2001b:1-2).

The places mentioned in the narratives also function to map out areas once lived in or frequented by the Metis, creating a sense of community places in the valley: places perceived by the Metis community as their places. Nuttall and Cruikshank note that places of significance can contribute to community boundaries or an image of the community that is reflected in the landscape: places "resonate with community consciousness" (Nuttall 1992:57-58; Cruikshank 1998:20). The places in the valley are no exception. The narratives about Julie's Coulee, Chicago Street, Hill Top, Dog Town and locales further down into the valley have Metis family names associated with them and contain references to Metis traditions (LaRocque 2001:1-2,3-4, 8-9,11-12,19-20). Julie's Coulee is named for a Metis woman, and the narrative makes reference to nicknames and Metis kinship settlement patterns. Chicago Street is similarly seen as a Metis place due to the families who lived there, and its narrative also

contains references to Metis traditions and values. Dog Town, and Hill Top: these are both Metis places, talked about in connection with kinship groups and employment and settlement practices. Bob Desjarlais' narratives about the Metis church, his uncle Joe Racette's trail, Pheasant Coulee, and New Year's in the valley all emphasize how these places in the valley are Metis places: places once used by Metis families and community members and still meaningful to the Metis (Desjarlais 2001a:24,26-27; Desjarlais 2001b:1-2,6-7).

As a corollary to this, places in the valley and their related stories also contribute to a sense of community and belonging. Scholars note there is a sense of group identity that develops through shared past experiences in place, especially when intertwined with kinship (Blu 1996:216; Kahn 1996:173-179; Stewart 1996:137; Cruikshank 1990:346-356). Casey and Basso observe that emplacement is social and collective in character (Casey 1993:23; Basso 1996:109). Stewart and Blu remark that the social rituals of placing people help to create a sense of community, especially for peoples whose perception of a group identity draws heavily upon social relationships and kinship networks rather than built structures or defined borders (Stewart 1996:137; Blu 1996:216). This seems to correspond well with Metis communities, which often reflected the "chain migration" pattern of extended families settled in close proximity. Metis communities were often large kinship units (Payment 1990:37). The Metis elders' and community members' place narratives emphasize this sense of community identity, belonging, and kinship. As mentioned previously, many of the places in the narratives are associated with Metis family names and relatives. Jim LaRocque's narratives about Julie's Coulee, Chicago Street, Hill Top, and Dog Town have Metis family names such as Blondeau, Brebant, Parisien, Pelletier, Desjarlais, Majore, and Poitras connected to them (LaRocque 2001: 1-2,3-4, 8-9,11-12,19-20). Bob Desjarlais' stories mention the Racette, Desjarlais, Amyotte, Poitras, Cardinal, and Klyne families (Desjarlais 2001a:24,26-27; Desjarlais 2001b:1-2,6-7,14-15). Interwoven with the family names are references to "our old church," described as a Metis church or the

coulee "where we used to hunt...for the people down in the valley," identified as Metis people (Desjarlais 2001a:26-27; Desjarlais 2001b:1-2).

Lastly, the valley places and their associated stories provide insight into Metis values, traditions and culture, and a sense of Metis identity by means of the experiences described in the narratives. Basso, Kahn, Cruikshank and others write of how places can act as a "keeper of tradition" and aid in reinforcing values, drawing attention to social norms and ways of behaving, highlighting obligations and aspects of cultural knowledge (Basso 1996:23-29,62-63; Kahn 1996:173-179; Cruikshank 1990:346-356). The narratives presented here also share this aspect of emphasizing cultural traditions and values. In the interviews, references are made to buffalo (and deer) hunting, to Saturday night fiddle dances, to holiday visiting, and to church attendance (LaRocque 2001:3-4,11-12; Desjarlais 2001a:24,26-27; Desjarlais 2001b:1-2,6-7; D. Fayant 2001:6). Values underscored in the narratives include the priority of family and maintaining close kinship ties, of belonging to the community, of working hard, and of sharing, generosity, and reciprocity. One or two more points remain to be stated about values and place, and these aspects will be mentioned in the following subsection.

Place Narrative and Praxis: Observations

As cited previously, Rodman contends that places come into being through praxis, not just through narratives (Rodman 1993:207). As Basso demonstrates so well in *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language Among the Western Apache* (1996), it is not only how places are talked about that is revealing, but how they are used in everyday life. In conclusion to this section, it is worthwhile looking slightly beyond the narratives to appreciate the centrality of place to Metis histories and sense of identities and community. In terms of history-making and constructing and re-presenting the past, I have observed a number of ways in which place plays a fundamental role. When I met with Jim LaRocque to discuss "history," our formal interview began with place names and was structured around places. Likewise, George Fayant, knowing that I was interested in doing an ethnohistory of the Metis, arranged for

me to accompany him and his uncle on a trip down in the valley to hear his uncle tell the stories about all the significant places there. It is also telling that while we were out on the land, Bob Desjarlais made his comment, "History. This is all history we're doing here" (Desjarlais 2001a:29). That Bob Desjarlais also sent me sketches of houses and the information about who lived there and where the houses were located, based on the understanding that I was working on a "history," supports the place-histories connection. So does the creation and maintenance of the Tapestry Trail by members of the local community so that "people on the trail could really feel like they are part of the history" (P. Fayant 2001a:4). In daily conversation, whether at the Eastern Region III office or in the Squire's coffee shop, I observed places used to talk about past events, both social and personal.

In common with this, a recognition (conscious or not) of the connection between place and a sense of self and community can also be observed through the actions of community members in everyday life and through casual conversation. While I was sitting and chatting with Cousin Robert in 2002, he suggested that I come to the Ste. Marthe reunion the next summer, so I could meet all my aunties and "no longer be lost." Bob Desjarlais organized a trip down to the family places in the valley with the newfound relations during the Racette Reunion so they could see all the places where their ancestors had lived. During one of my first visits with my father's cousin Bertha, she took me to see St. Joseph and Ste. Marthe, Metis places of significance in the valley. Lebret Metis Cultural Days, a local celebration of cultural traditions, takes place every summer just north of Julie's Coulee at the Metis farm. Every time I met a community member, I was asked who my ancestors and relatives were and, just as importantly, from which community they came. Perhaps, the valley elders and community members have their own version of Kitty Smith's "My roots grow in jackpine roots" (Cruikshank 1990:252), that is, an understanding that a sense of self is intertwined with place, and that there is no self without place (Casey 2001a:405-406). Perhaps they know that knowledge of places is linked to knowledge of oneself (Basso 1996: 34) or that if looking for a sense of

self is really a search for place (Malpas 1999:178), then the hills, coulees, and trails are a good place to start this journey of self-conceptualization.

Finally, the actions surrounding the narratives need to be highlighted. As cited previously, Cruikshank notes that oral traditions acquire meaning in the situations in which they are used, in the interactions between narrators and listeners (Cruikshank 1998:40). She affirms that we need to understand how oral narrative is part of a communicative process: we have to learn what a story *says*, and then we have to learn what a story can *do* when used as a strategy of communication (Cruikshank 1998:41). Thus, unless we attend to why a specific story is selected and shared, "we understand very little of its meanings" (Cruikshank 1998:41). So, why was I told these place stories? Perhaps the simplest reason is that I needed to hear them. Possibly it was because I was working on a "history," and I needed to hear about these places to understand how Metis histories are created. Maybe it could also be because of my tenuous ties to the area: as a person with kinship ties but no previous experience of living in the valley, maybe I needed to hear "what it is (and was) to be Metis" in the context of that place. Basso writes that some of the places in and around Cibecue convey "what it means to be a Western Apache" to community members (Basso 1996:52). Perhaps there is a valley variety of this and the place stories, with their cultural traditions and values, reinforce what it means to be Metis in this place. Perchance it was to pass along community histories and cultural knowledge to someone of another generation so that the places and their stories could be remembered. Basso observes that these stories illustrating what it means to be Apache remain in force when anchored to places even after the original storyteller dies or the listener moves somewhere else (Basso 1996:52,59). I know that for me, the stories about the Metis church or my great-grandfather's house are still present in me and anchored in their places, even though the storytellers of both have since passed away. Lastly, perhaps it was to bring attention to how vital these places continue to be for a sense of self, community, and for communal histories: to see how they remain significant and meaningful to the people of the valley.

æn nistwayr: "Epilogue--The Stories Live On"

Bob Desjarlais passed away in April 2004. He is at rest in the valley of his stories, with a mini replica of a Red River cart on his grave. His voice is now a whisper through the trees, quietly insistent: "Don't forget."

I remember the last time I saw him. We were in the bakeshop on the town's main street. It was October 2003 and the fall air had a chill in it, a promise of colder weather yet to come. I was down for one of my quick visits. We sat in the crowded bake shop, drinking coffee, and talking about what was new and had happened since I was there last. He said that he wanted to go down to the places in the valley and make a video of it all: a video with him telling the stories that went with each place. That way, there was something concrete that could be preserved and used to show others where and how the Metis had lived. He had been talking to someone who might be able to help him out, but he wasn't sure if it would pan out or not. I encouraged him to try and do it before the snow arrived, as winter would put an end to the project for another season. Turns out, winter put an end to the project for good. Bob was gone six months later, and I don't believe he ever did get a chance to video those places that meant so much to him.

My great-aunt also passed away since I started this thesis. She died a year and a half after she showed me the places where my father, grandparents, and great-grandparents used to live. She and my great-uncle, also gone since this project began, were the last of my father's relatives who had grown up in the Metis community near Crooked Lake. They were the last ones who could share those stories with me. Those tales about working for the local farmers, caring for each others' children through fever and illness, and walking miles down the road to fiddle dances and jigging all night...those stories are still around. As are the ones about living off the land, looking out for each other, and finding strength, comfort, and solace in the valley and in its people. The stories of Crooked Lake, Lebret and *baran bas* highlight the importance of family and kinship, of hard work and an enjoyment of life, of caring for others and

reinforcing a sense of community, and with that a sense of place and histories. Before my father died, he wrote out a story about his family and his memories of his grandparents. The handwritten narrative was passed down to me. At the end of his memoir, reflecting on Crooked Lake, he wrote, "The Metis has all but disappeared from the area...[but] someone who has lived in Saskatchewan in a city, town, or hamlet and who has moved elsewhere never forgets his roots. As each generation passes on, another generation takes it place...but true history will go on forever" (M. Pelletier n.d.:7). The original storytellers may have left us, but the places are still here and so are their stories. Legacy. This is also the remarkable power of place.

Conclusion

Casey remarks that Archytas not only argued for the priority of place, he emphasized that place is the limit and condition of all that exists (Casey 1993:14-15). Similarly, Aristotle commented that everything must be somewhere and in place; the power of place is remarkable (Casey 1993:13-14). It is indeed remarkable: it possesses the power to direct and stabilize us, to memorialize and identify us, to tell us who and what we are in terms of *where we are* (Casey 1993:xv). More than just a peripheral setting or static backdrop for events and societies, place is dynamic and reciprocal, complex and multiple, meaningful and processual (Tilley 1994:11; Rodman 2003:205; Hirsch 1995:5-6). As many scholars stress, place is crucial to any knowledge of temporality or sociality and is a fundamental component of their existence (Soja 1996:71-73; Casey 1993:19-21; Casey 1996:36,44; Massey 1994:4; Malpas 1999:15,17). Regarding temporality, time cannot exist independently of place: there is no time without place, for time arises from the experience of place itself (Casey 1993:21; Casey 1996:36). Stemming from this interconnection between temporality and spatiality, place is also integral to the construction and re-presentation of histories (Massey 1993:159), as memories of past events tend to be place-oriented or place-supported: the remembering of past events can be seen as a re-experiencing of past places (Casey 1987:186-187,201).

In terms of social aspects, there is no place without self and no self without place (Casey 2001a:406). Through emplaced experience, local and self-knowledge is generated: personal identity involves an awareness of one's place (Casey 1996:18; Casey 2001a:405-406). Knowledge of places is linked to knowledge of the self and one's position in the world: who one is as a person (Basso 1996:34). These places come to people lastingly: "we are still...many years later *in the places to which we are subject* because...*they are in us*...indeed, *are us*" (Casey 2001b:688). As individuals experience places together, place-making takes on a collective quality (Basso 1996:109; Casey 1993:23; Soja 1996:73). Many of the ethnographic works cited here attest to the

centrality of place to communal identity and a sense of community and belonging (Stewart 1996:137,148; Kahn 1996:167-168,178; Blu 1996:223-224; Nuttall 1992:57-58; Basso 1996:35). Thus, this interrelation between time, place, and communities means that we are "first and always historical-social-spatial beings, actively participating individually and collectively in the construction-production--the 'becoming' of histories, geographies, societies" (Soja 1996:73).

For the Metis in the Qu'Appelle Valley, place plays an essential part in the recollection and imparting of histories. As apparent in the narratives of elders and community members, the personal and social memories of the valley Metis are place-oriented and interconnected with their surroundings (Desjarlais 2001a; Desjarlais 2001b; D. Fayant 2001; LaRocque 2001; LaRose 2001). Remembered places in the valley such as Chicago Street, Hill Top, Dog Town, Pheasant Coulee and others also provide an anchor for past events, a structure for the memories associated with them, and a means for framing and shaping narratives (Desjarlais 2001a:24; Desjarlais 2001b:1-2,14-15; LaRocque 2001:1-2,3-4,8-9,11-12,19-20). These historical narratives also emphasize the primacy of place over time in the recollection of events. The stories about Julie's Coulee, Hill Top, Chicago Street, and Dog Town all have specific years in the past associated with them, but none of the narratives use chronological time as the starting point or main referent (Desjarlais 2001a:24,26-27; Desjarlais 2001b:1-2,6-7,14-15; D. Fayant 2001:6; LaRocque 2001:1-2,3-4, 8-9,11-12,19-20). Furthermore, these places contribute to community histories and understandings of a shared past through both narrative and praxis. Memories of Chicago Street, Julie's Coulee, the Metis church, and Pheasant Coulee all play a part in adding to the community knowledge about the past (Desjarlais 2001a:26-27; Desjarlais 2001b:1-2; LaRocque 2001:8-9,11-12). The crucial connection between place and the past is also apparent in the ways that community members use places to construct and share histories: places and place names are used to talk about "history," newcomers and the younger generation are shown places to get an understanding of the past, and

community members create opportunities to move through the land to come to terms with the past.

A sense of self-identity, community, and a feeling of belonging, as generated through personal and collective emplaced experience, is also intertwined with place. Also evidenced in the elders' and community members' narratives and their actions, as well as my own experiences, place is central in conceptualizations of individual and community identities. Stories about Chicago Street, Hill Top, Dog Town and places further down in the valley contain Metis family names, describe the areas used and settled by the Metis and make references to Metis traditions, thus serving to map out these locales as Metis places (Desjarlais 2001a:24,26-27; Desjarlais 2001b:1-2,6-7; LaRocque 2001: 1-2,3-4, 8-9,11-12,19-20). In addition, the valley narratives also underscore a sense of community identity, belonging, and kinship through the use of family names and emphasis on kinship connections (Desjarlais 2001a:24,26-27; Desjarlais 2001b:1-2,6-7,14-15; LaRocque 2001: 1-2,3-4, 8-9,11-12,19-20). The valley places and their associated narratives also highlight Metis traditions, values, and cultural knowledge. Hunting deer in Pheasant Coulee, dancing all night on Chicago Street, or gathering together as a community every Sunday at the Metis church: these narratives make reference to specific Metis values and traditions (LaRocque 2001:3-4,11-12; Desjarlais 2001a:24,26-27; Desjarlais 2001b:1-2,6-7; D. Fayant 2001:6). Community members also talk about and use places to reinforce a sense of self and identity. Newcomers are constantly placed: asked who their kin groups are and from where they come. Newly met family members are shown places of significance to understand their heritage and roots.

These examples of how places in the valley are used in daily praxis and spoken about in narrative by Metis community members to construct and share memories of the past as well as to create a sense of identity and belonging reinforce the importance of place to Metis histories and communities. And as mentioned previously, the Qu'Appelle Valley experience is just one of the many instances of this connection between Metis peoples and their meaningful

places, situations which can be found elsewhere. Metis families journey to Batoche every year to participate in cultural traditions and strengthen kinship ties, while they commemorate their losses there. Others return to communities such as Lebret or Crescent Lake for similar cultural events, to meet with family, and to remember the places where they used to live. Individuals talk about "Metis communities" in the "homeland" and community names are used in conversation in tandem with family names to affirm Metis ethnicity (*New Breed Magazine* 2001a:18-21; *New Breed Magazine* 2001b:19-30,36-44; Shore and Barkwell 1997; J. Pelletier n.d.). Echoing the valley interconnections of kinship, traditions, place, and histories, the Metis National Council believes that Metis identity and nationhood arises from "a shared history, a common culture...extensive kinship connections...a distinct way of life, a traditional territory, and a collective consciousness" (Metis National Council 2006).

The implications of the centrality of place to Metis histories and identities are far-reaching. Recognition of the importance of place should contribute to a reconceptualization of the way Metis histories are created, produced, and re-presented, which can include how they are taught in formalized settings. Likewise, this acknowledgement of the role of place in understandings of the self and community will provide much needed insight into Metis identity and community studies—it reinforces the importance of in-depth local community studies. Dorion and Préfontaine seem to endorse this approach themselves when they observe that Metis identities and communities have blossomed in diverse ways in various geographical locales and that the Metis experience remains a "hidden history" best expressed by the memories of elders and community members (Dorion and Préfontaine 2001:13,17-22). Certainly, in these times of land claims and the assertion of resource-harvesting rights, a solid appreciation of how relevant place is to a sense of Metis identities and a feeling of community is essential.

Places deserve our attention now as much as ever (Basso 1996:111). This study is an initial step into an anthropology of Metis places, an area of research that is much needed. And as can be said about place research in

general, much more remains to be accomplished. This is indeed a time of great possibilities for exploring and understanding Metis places. Intriguing areas of study await us--political aspects of Metis places, movement between and within places, alterity and absence, and the perduringness of people in places--and these research areas grow more relevant with each passing day. As greater numbers of Metis leave their home communities and reside in cities, a need to understand new and evolving relationships to place arises as Metis people are "being and becoming" in urban settings (Metis National Council 2006). Yet, as this thesis also demonstrates, the past places of Metis ancestors, with all of their stories and memories, do remain meaningful to their descendants even if they cannot see the coulees from the kitchen window in their city homes. The significance of these places still exists. Indeed, attachments to places are as complex as they are multiple. Casey writes that getting back into place is an ongoing task that calls for continual journeying between and among places (Casey 1993:314). And as befits place-making, it is a journey that is always in process. Whether it is a visit to Ste. Marthe to be lost no longer, a trip down in the valley to understand the past, or a stop at Crooked Lake to see where the houses of my ancestors once stood, place is the basis of it all. Place is "the first of all things" (Casey 1993:14).

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Appendix

Figure 1: Map of Saskatchewan (Canada 2006)

Legend: A: Lebret, SK

B: Crooked Lake, SK

C: St. Joseph-Ste, Marthe, SK

Figure 2: Map of the Qu'Appelle River and Lakes (University of Regina 2006)

Plate 1: Julie's Coulee (south view), near Lebret, SK. Photograph taken by Jacqueline Pelletier, October 2002.

Plate 2: Julie's Coulee (north view), near Lebret, SK. Photograph taken by Jacqueline Pelletier, October 2002.

Plate 3: Hill Top (above valley), near Lake Katepwa. Photograph taken by Jacqueline Pelletier, October 2002.

Plate 4: Lebret, SK. Old Chicago Street on far right side. Photograph taken by Jacqueline Pelletier, October 2002.

Plate 5: Lebret, SK. Old Chicago Street in centre. Photograph taken by Jacqueline Pelletier, October 2002.

Plate 6: End of Lake Katepwa including old settlement area of Dog Town. Photograph taken by Jacqueline Pelletier, October 2002.

Plate 7: End of Lake Katepwa including old settlement area of Dog Town. Photograph taken by Jacqueline Pelletier, October 2002.

Plate 8: Uncle Joe Racette's trail. Photograph taken by Jacqueline Pelletier, October 2002.

Plate 9: The Old Metis church (St.Patrick's). Photograph taken by Jacqueline Pelletier, February 2002.

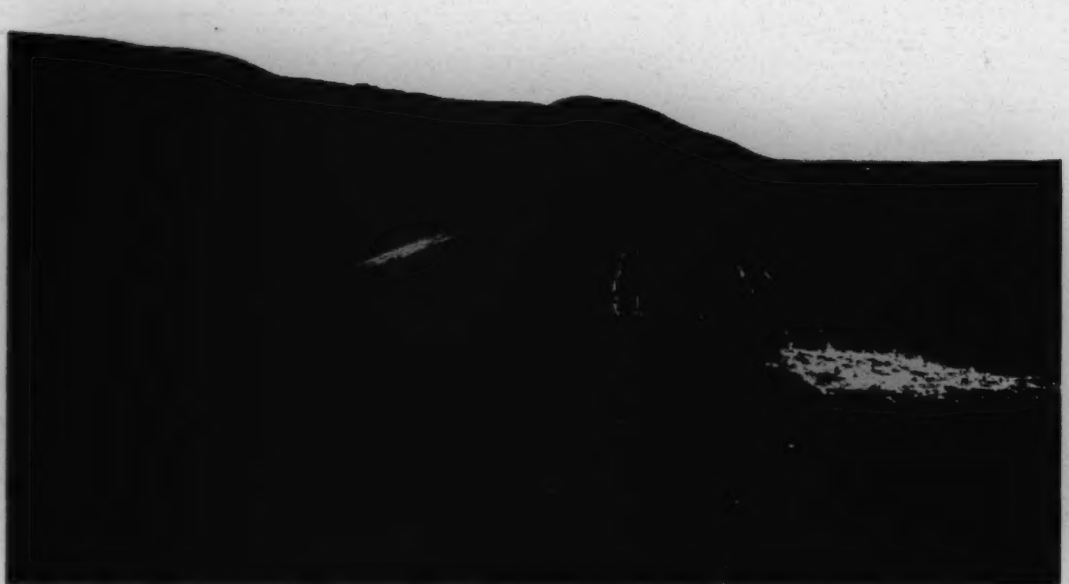

Plate 10: Blackwood (facing east). Photograph taken by Jacqueline Pelletier, October 2002.

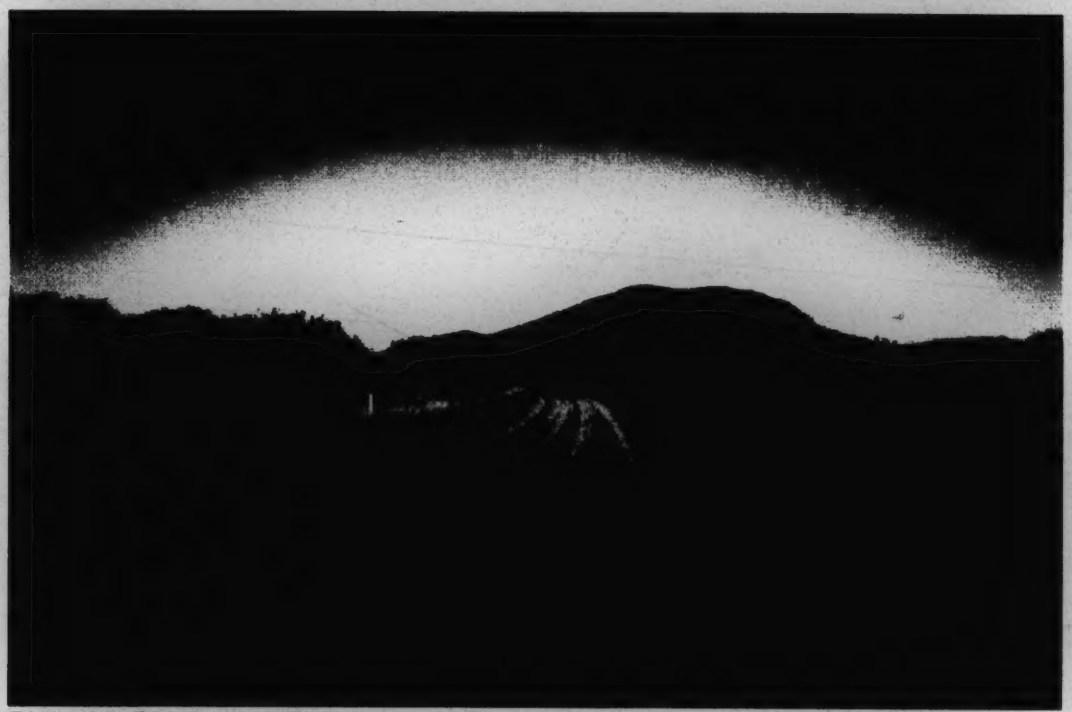

Plate 11: Blackwood (facing west). Photograph taken by Jacqueline Pelletier, October 2002.

Plate 12: Crooked Lake. Photograph taken by Jacqueline Pelletier, summer 2001.

Plate 13: Crooked Lake. Photograph taken by Jacqueline Pelletier, summer 2001.

Plate 14: Road to Ste. Marthe, near the historical site of Fort Esperance. Photograph taken by Jacqueline Pelletier, October 2002.

Plate 15: Road to the former settlement of St. Joseph. Photograph taken by Jacqueline Pelletier, October 2002.